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THE SPY UNMASKED.

B

N

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

THE
SPY UNMASKED;
OR,
MEMOIRS
OF
ENOCH CROSBY, ALIAS HARVEY BIRCH,
THE HERO OF THE
"SPY, A TALE OF THE NEUTRAL GROUND,"
BY MR. COOPER,
AUTHOR OF "THE PILOT," "THE RED ROVER," &c. &c.

By H. L. BARNUM.

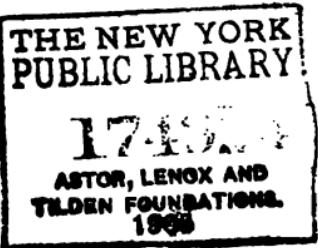
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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DEDICATION.

TO JAMES F. COOPER, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "THE SPY," "RED ROVER," &c.

SIR,

As it was your fascinating pen that first immortalized the subject of the following memoir, while it elevated the literary reputation of our free and happy country, the compiler has ventured to prefix your name to this unauthorized dedication.

Rest assured, sir, that in taking this
liberty,

liberty, the undersigned had no other incentive but a profound respect for your talents as an author, and a warm esteem for your virtues as a man.

Under the hope that the motive will justify the act, he begs leave to subscribe himself

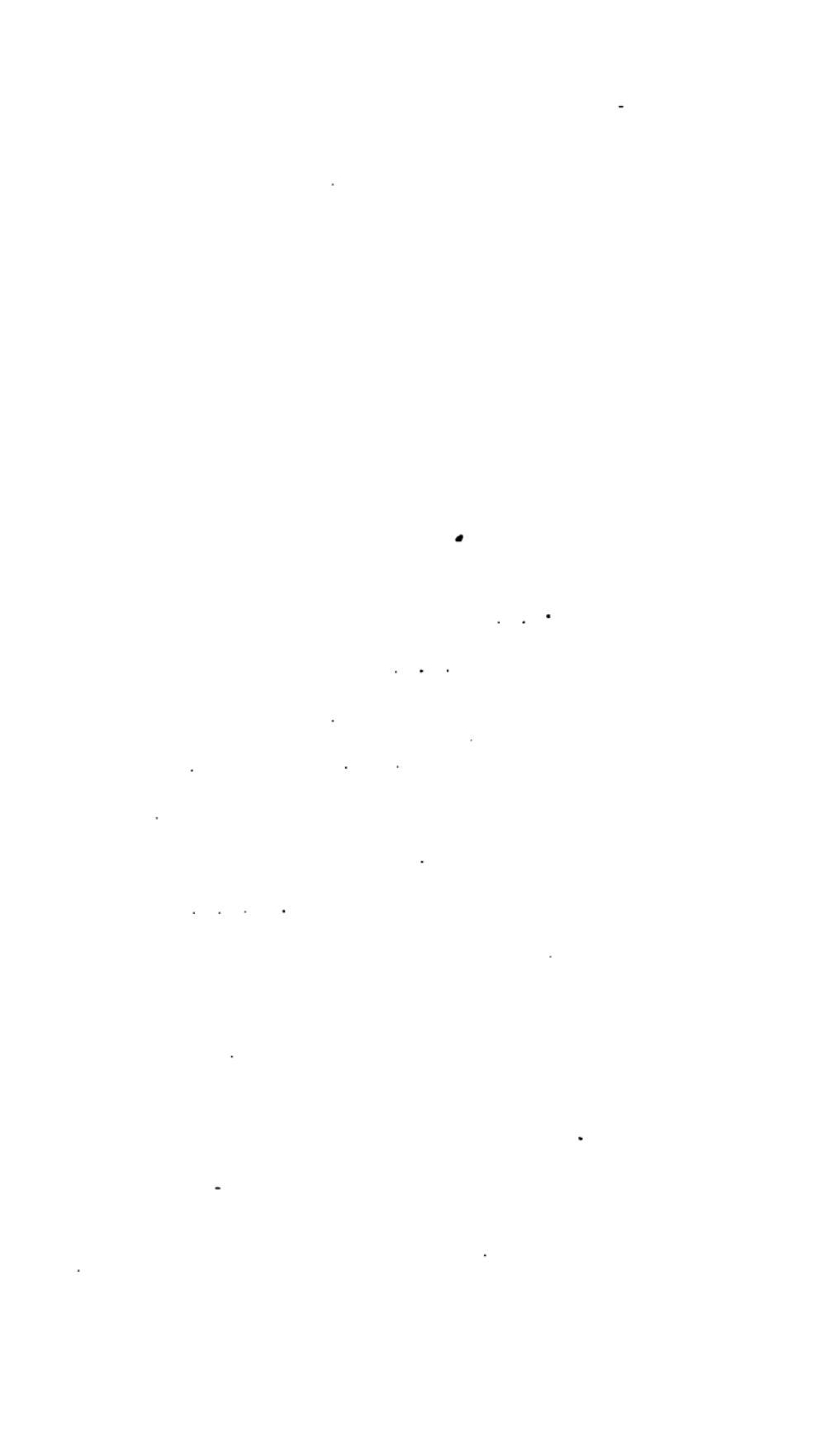
Your most obedient, and very
humble servant,

H. L. BARNUM.

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INTRODUCTION.

SINCE the first publication of Mr. Cooper's interesting novel of "The Spy, a Tale of the Neutral Ground," much curiosity has been excited in the reading community, respecting the *original* of that excellent portraiture, HARVEY BIRCH. It seemed to be generally admitted, that the Spy was not a fictitious personage, but a real character, drawn from life; and the author himself intimates as much in his preface, where he admits that "a good portion of the tale is true."

VOL. I.

B

But

But we are happy to assure the reader, that the fact does not rest upon the slender basis of fanciful conjecture. A gentleman of good standing and respectability, who has filled honourable official stations in the county of Westchester, and who has long enjoyed the friendship and confidence of Mr. Cooper, informed the writer of this article, on the authority of Mr. Cooper himself, that the *outline* of the character of Harvey Birch was actually sketched from that of ENOCH CROSBY; but filled up, partly from imagination, and partly from similar features in the lives of two or three others, who were also engaged in *secret services*, during the revolutionary war. But Mr. Cooper has frequently assured our informant, that, though

though he had borrowed incidents from the lives of others, to complete the portrait, yet ENOCH CROSBY was certainly the *original* which he had in his "mind's eye."

That there were several such *secret agents* in the service of the leaders of the revolution, is a fact that is now well known—a fact to which the author alludes in the first chapter of "The Spy," where he says—"Many an individual has gone down to the tomb, stigmatized as a foe to the rights of his countrymen, while, *in secret*, he has been the useful agent of the leaders of the revolution." Each of these individuals might have contributed a tint, a shade, a line, or perhaps a feature, to the character of

Harvey Birch; but we think no one can peruse the following pages, without being convinced that Enoch Crosby was the original model from which that character was formed.

It is highly probable, however, that Mr. Cooper never saw Crosby; and, of course, could not have received the incidents of his life from his own lips, as did the compiler of the following Memoir. But the honourable John Jay, it will be recollectcd, was chairman of the "Committee of Safety," under whose sanction Crosby's secret services were performed; and we understand it was at Mr. Jay's residence that the novel of "The Spy" was first conceived and brought into existence. This venerable patriot

patriot (better than any one else, not even excepting the *secret agents* themselves), could furnish Mr. Cooper with every requisite material for the character of Harvey Birch; although he was under the erroneous impression, that Enoch Crosby had long since paid the debt of nature.

On learning the foregoing facts, from the gentleman alluded to above, the writer of this narrative, being then about twenty miles from the residence of Mr. Crosby, was induced to pay him a visit, for the purpose of hearing some of the incidents of his life related by himself; but without the least intention of ever committing them to paper.

Although perfect strangers to each other, the old gentleman gave his visitor a cordial reception, and readily complied with his request, by relating several particulars of his own eventful life. Some of these were of so interesting a nature, as induced his auditor to suggest the propriety of laying them before the public. The aged veteran modestly waived such a proposition, considering the events of his life as of too little consequence to claim attention from the patrons of literature. He had never seen "The Spy," as novels were not included in his present course of reading; he was consequently ignorant of being himself the very hero of the tale. When advised of this fact, and solicited to peruse the work, he consented; and the visitor took his leave.

A short

A short time subsequent to this interview; Mr. Crosby was called to the city of New-York, to give his testimony in an important lawsuit, respecting the transfer of some valuable real estate. While attending court, in the City Hall, he was recognised by an old gentleman, who, not having heard of him for a number of years, supposed (like Jay and Cooper) that Crosby had been, long since, numbered with the dead. After such mutual greetings as are usual on similar occasions, Crosby's old acquaintance turned to the court, and introduced his friend as "the original Harvey Birch of Mr. Cooper's '*Spy*.'

This anecdote being published in some of the daily papers, Mr. Sandford,

proprietor of the La Fayette theatre, politely invited Mr. Crosby to attend the representation of the drama of the "*Spy*," which was performed expressly for that occasion.

Mr. Crosby complied; and the circumstance being announced in the papers, a numerous audience attended, who received the old soldier with several rounds of applause, which he modestly acknowledged. He appeared to be much interested in the performance; and readily admitted, that some of the incidents resembled transactions in which he himself had been an actor in "olden time," on "the Neutral Ground."

How Mr. Crosby was pleased with
his

his reception in the city, will be seen from the following letter, which he sent to the editors of the "Journal of Commerce," in which paper it appeared on the twenty-first day of December last, 1827.

"*For the Journal of Commerce.*

" MESSRS. EDITORS,

" It would be an unsatisfactory restraint of my feelings, should I not express my gratitude to the citizens of New-York, for their kind attention to me, during my late visit to that city, and particularly to the managers of the theatre, who politely invited me to witness the play called the '*Spy*.'

" I was much gratified with the performance;

formance ; for, while it called to mind those trying scenes of the revolutionary war, it also created happy emotions, in reflecting upon the glorious result of our labours during that perilous time, which brought with it Independence and Prosperity ; and having been spared to enjoy those blessings for half a century, and see them still continued, I can lay down my weary and worn-out limbs in peace and happiness, to see my feeble labours rewarded, and my greatest wishes answered, in gaining our independence, and the blessings attending it ; and my most earnest and fervent prayer is, and shall be, that they may be perpetuated to the latest posterity,

“ Yours, very respectfully,

“ ENOCH CROSBY.

“ *December 15, 1827.*”

The

The writer of these pages now felt convinced that the public curiosity demanded an authentic narrative of Enoch Crosby's *secret services*, during the revolutionary war. Under this impression, he paid him a second visit; and, after much persuasion, prevailed on him to relate the principal incidents of his life, in the order they occurred, while his visitor took them down, from his lips, in *short-hand*. The *substance* of the following pages may, therefore, be depended upon as *facts*, related by Mr. Crosby himself. It is true, the *language* is, in most instances, the compiler's; but the *ideas*, with very few exceptions, are Crosby's own. The *language* was changed for the two following reasons:—

First, The events and incidents of Crosby's life were related to the compiler in the *first person*, which would have precluded many other facts, from various sources, which have a connection with, or a bearing on, those furnished by himself. By changing the style to the *third person*, the compiler was at liberty to interweave several important events, which can certainly detract nothing from the merits of the work.

Secondly, The particulars of Crosby's adventures, as narrated in the following pages, were elicited in a catechetical colloquy, the style of which is seldom sufficiently accurate or elevated for the page of history; but the facts themselves

selves did all actually occur, with very trifling variation.

The following work has been divided into chapters, for the convenience of the reader, in making references, &c. each of which has been headed with a motto, in order that his path, as he proceeds through the narrative, might be diversified with a few flowers of acknowledged sweetness. They may be “read or sung, at the discretion of” those who honour the book with a perusal; or they may be passed over unnoticed; for a motto, like a parenthesis, “can always be omitted without injuring the sense.”

the fourth day of January, 1750, a year rendered somewhat remarkable by the first indication of a wish, on the part of the British Parliament, to infringe the rights and privileges of the American colonies*.

It would not be an unpardonable hyperbole to say, that the adventures of Enoch Crosby commenced at the early age of *three years*, as, at that period, he left the place of his nativity, and, after a journey of more than two hundred miles, became a resident in the state

* It is well known, that the "mother country" had, for a long period, reaped a rich harvest from the trade of her colonial subjects in North America. In order to secure a perpetuity of these commercial advantages, by compelling her colonists to "let their workshops remain in Europe," sundry prohibitory acts were passed by Parliament, in the year alluded to, which produced considerable excitement on this side the Atlantic.

state of New-York. His father had purchased a farm in the township of South-east*, then in the county of Dutchess, but since set off as part of the county of Putnam, to which place he removed his family in 1753.

In this delightful retreat, Enoch passed the happy period of childhood, blessed with parents whose tenderness and affection were only equalled by the rectitude of their lives, and indulged with every

* This town derives its name from its situation, being the *south-east* corner of Putnam county. In extent, it is about six miles square, bounded by Connecticut on the east, and the county of Westchester (the neutral ground) on the south. The face of the country is rather mountainous and hilly, with numerous little valleys, running south-west and north-east. It is well watered by the Croton and Mill rivers, and their tributary streams. There are, in the town, five natural ponds, the largest of which is two miles in length, and one in breadth.

every reasonable gratification that moderate affluence could procure.

The natural scenery which surrounded his paternal mansion was picturesque, wild, and romantic, and, no doubt, contributed to tinge his infantile mind with that cast of romance and adventure which so eminently influenced the actions of his riper years. His earliest recreations were among cragged rocks and dizzy steeps, frightful precipices, roaring cataracts, and placid lakes. A high and romantic eminence, called Joe's Hill, which rises near the centre of the town, and extends several miles into the state of Connecticut, was the theatre of many of his juvenile exploits, as were also the flowery banks of the meandering Croton, and the borders of several beautiful ponds, which lie, like mirrors, in the bottom of valleys, reflecting, from their lucid surface, the mountains

mountains and the sky. Endowed by nature with more than ordinary physical advantages, he generally bore away the palm from his playfellows in every athletic exercise; especially such as required a combination of personal courage, strength, and activity.

Thus for several years glided the smooth current of his existence, sparkling in the sunbeams of hope, and unruffled by any intruding cares, save such as are incidental to the April morning of life. As his mental faculties gradually developed themselves, they were doubtless assisted by such precarious literary instruction as could be conveniently obtained in a thinly-populated district, at a period when the state of education was not very promising in any part of the country.

Under such circumstances, it is not to
be

be presumed that a lad of fourteen years could have a very clear idea of the political relations existing between different countries; yet there is little doubt that the political discussions to which, at that age, he was frequently a silent listener, had considerable influence in preparing his mind for the part he was destined to perform in the great drama of the revolution.

These discussions originated in certain acts of the British parliament, which were passed in the year 1764; one of which commenced in the following alarming terms:—"Whereas it is just and necessary that a revenue be raised in America, for defraying the expences of defending, protecting, and securing the same*, we, the commons, &c. give and

* Tudor, in his life of Otis, gives us the following interesting anecdote:—When president Adams was

and grant unto your majesty, the sum
of," &c. Here followed a specification
of

was minister at the court of St. James, he often saw his countryman, Benjamin West, the late president of the Royal Academy. Mr. West always retained a strong and unyielding affection for his native land. Mr. West one day asked Mr. Adams if he should like to take a walk with him, and see the cause of the American revolution. The minister, having known something of this matter, smiled at the proposal, but told him that he should be glad to see the cause of that revolution, and to take a walk with his friend West, anywhere. The next morning he called, according to agreement, and took Mr. Adams into Hyde Park, to a spot near the Serpentine River, where he gave him the following narrative:—"The king came to the throne a young man, surrounded by flattering courtiers; one of whose frequent topics it was, to declaim against the meanness of his palace, which was wholly unworthy a monarch of such a country as England. They said that there was not a sovereign in Europe who was lodged so poorly; that his sorry, dingy, old, brick palace of St. James, looked like a stable, and that he ought to build a palace suitable to his kingdom.

The

of *duties* on certain articles of foreign produce, such as sugar, indigo, coffee, silks, calicoes, molasses, and syrups.

This being the first act of the kind (avowedly for the purpose of raising a revenue from the colonies,) that had ever

The king was fond of architecture, and would therefore more readily listen to suggestions, which were in fact all true. This spot that you see here was selected for the site, between this and this point, which were marked out. The king applied to his ministers on the subject; they inquired what sum would be wanted by his majesty, who said that he would begin with a million: they stated the expences of the war, and the poverty of the treasury, but that his majesty's wishes should be taken into full consideration. Some time afterwards, the king was informed, that the wants of the treasury were too urgent to admit of a supply from their present means, but that a revenue might be raised in America to supply all the king's wishes. This suggestion was followed up, and the king was in this way first led to consider, and then to consent, to the scheme for taxing the colonies."

ever disgraced the parliamentary statute book, it naturally produced much excitement and animadversion on this side the Atlantic. The merits of the question were freely and warmly canvassed by persons of all conditions and ages, and in every situation where two or three happened to be congregated; by females as well as males, and even by children in their seasons of recreation. The village lasses felt indignant at the interference of parliament in matters connected with the regulation of their wardrobes; while the children justly apprehended some economical restrictions in their usual allowance of gingerbread and sweetmeats.

Master Enoch, of course, was not an indifferent auditor of these perpetual discussions; but regularly reiterated, to an audience of schoolfellows, such of his father's arguments and observations
as

as his juvenile mind partially comprehended. Each of his comrades could, from a similar source, furnish his own quota of remark ; and thus a determined spirit of opposition to ministerial encroachments on colonial rights, was permanently, and almost instinctively, established in the bosoms of the rising generation, even before they were capable of understanding the nature or extent of the subject.

Ere these newly-awakened feelings, in the minds of Americans, were allowed time to subside, the celebrated stamp act was received from England. The astonishment, alarm, and indignation, which now agitated every patriotic breast, would not be restrained, but burst forth in expressions and *acts* that could not be misunderstood by the friends and abettors of the obnoxious measure. A string of patriotic resolu-

tions on the subject, offered by the celebrated Patrick Henry, and adopted by the legislature of Virginia, were printed, and circulated through all the provinces. Wherever they were read, they were hailed with enthusiasm ; even schoolboys were encouraged to recite them in their respective classes, and exhorted to imbibe the spirit by which they had been dictated *.

A new mode of expressing the popular resentment against this odious act, began with the Whigs in Boston, and was soon adopted by those of the neighbouring colonies. This was by hanging or burning, in effigy, such of the principal loyalists as had openly avowed themselves friendly to the revenue system. The temper which prompted these

* When these resolutions were first read in the house of burgesses, in Virginia, the boldness and novelty of them affected one of the members to such a degree, that he cried out—“ Treason ! treason !”

tumultuous proceedings rapidly spread through the colonies, until popular commotions prevailed to a degree that gave serious alarm to those cool and reflecting citizens who regarded the morals as well as the liberties of their country. Scarcely a day passed, without furnishing the peaceful inhabitants of South-east with some new account of riots*, mobs, and summary chastisements, inflicted on the friends of the stamp act, in Boston, Newport, New-York, Baltimore, and other populous towns. This was certainly a dangerous spirit to let loose in society; and though, in the present instance, its excesses were, perhaps, in some measure, sanctified by its motives, still the necessity of its existence was deeply deplored by the best friends of their country.

The

* In all America there had been but *seven* presses issuing newspapers, previous to the year 1750. In 1765 they had increased to *twenty-six* on the Continent, and *five* in the West India Islands.

The mind of youth is easily dazzled by such vivid coruscations of patriotic fervour; and there is little doubt that they had a due share of influence in the formation of Enoch Crosby's character.

About this period, patriotic associations were formed, the members of which were denominated the "*Sons of Liberty*," and they agreed "to march with the utmost expedition (at their own proper cost and expence) with their whole force, to the relief of those who should be in danger from the stamp act, or its *promoters and abettors*, on account of any thing done in opposition to its obtaining." This agreement was subscribed to by such numbers in New-York and the eastern states, that nothing short of a repeal of the offensive act could have prevented the immediate commencement of a civil war. It was accordingly repealed on the eighteenth of March 1766.

The subject of this memoir very distinctly remembers the unusual rejoicings which took place in his vicinity, in consequence of this highly-interesting event. Similar demonstrations of joy were exhibited throughout the colonies. The names of Camden and Pitt were cheered to the skies. Every indignant resolution was immediately rescinded; the churches resounded with thanksgivings; illuminations and bonfires were every where exhibited; and a joyful holiday was held throughout the country. This was another circumstance that made a lasting impression on the youthful mind of Enoch, and assisted in the formation of a character which has since been so admirably delineated by the pen of a master.

But while the whole country was thus dissolved in joy, there were not wanting a few enlightened patriots, who maintained

tained “ that the immoderate transports of the colonists were disproportioned to the advantage they had gained ;” for at the same time that the stamp act was repealed, the *absolute unlimited supremacy of parliament* was, in words, asserted.

“ Wherefore do we rejoice ?” asked the good clergyman, to whose pious exhortations, both in public and private, the Crosby family ever listened with pleased and devout attention. “ Is it because the parliament of Great Britain has been graciously pleased to exchange our handcuffs for fetters ? Is it because she claims the power and right to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever ? Are we prepared for this ? Shall the petty island of Great Britain, scarce a speck on the map of the world, control the free citizens of the great continent of America ? God forbid ! ”

"I believe, sir," replied the elder Crosby, "that we are hallooing before we are fairly out of the woods. Our politicians seem to overlook the degrading condition which is tacked to this boasted repeal, that we must make compensation to those who have suffered, in person or property, through their own wilful adherence to the cause of our oppressors. If we submit to this, we deserve to be slaves."

"It appears to me," observed the village schoolmaster, who happened to be present, and who was strongly suspected of leaning to the ministerial side of the question, "it appears to me, that if we look at this subject by the pure light of sober reason, and not by the illusive flashes of excited passion, we shall see the propriety of waiving all debate and controversy; and, for the sake of internal peace, of making the trifling compensation required. It cannot amount to much."

"It

"It is not the amount of the sum that I object to," returned the other. "It is the principle that I am contending for. If we yield in one point, there is no telling how far their encroachments may extend."

"Is not their compliance with our petitions for repealing the stamp act an evidence of their respect for the rights of the colonies?"

"No, sir," replied the clergyman. "In this measure the ministry have not been so much actuated by principles of equity, as impelled by necessity."

"Necessity!" reiterated the pedagogue. "To me it appears an act of favour and lenity."

"The doctrine of submission, passive obedience, and non-resistance, may do very well in the discipline of your school," answered Crosby; "but I hope my son will never imbibe from you, or any other man, such sentiments as applied in politics."

Here the conversation terminated ; and Enoch, who was present, did not feel any great increase of respect towards his preceptor in consequence : nor was it long afterwards that his father placed him under the tuition of an elderly gentleman, of superior literary acquirements, whose political sentiments were in accordance with his own. As this personage will again appear on the stage, in the progress of our little drama, we beg the reader to bear in mind that he is not only a “staunch Whig,” but in every other respect a worthy man.

CHAP. II.

LEAVING HOME.

" Here, as, with wearied steps, I bent my way,
I mark'd each dear and well-remembered spot,
Where youth had buoyed my mind with visions gay,
Nor thought I then how hard would be my lot."

AT the period of which we are writing, it was the earnest wish of all parties that harmony might be reestablished between Great Britain and her American colonies. The severities of the British government "had not yet taught the colonists to express themselves in any other modes of language, but what indicated their firm attachment to the

mother country; nor had they erased the habitual ideas, even of tenderness, conveyed in their usual modes of expression. When they formed a design to visit England, it had always been thus announced—"I am going home." *Home*, the seat of happiness, the retreat of all the felicities of the human mind, is too intimately associated with the best feelings of the heart, to renounce without pain, whether applied to the natural or the political parent*."

But although a strong desire for the reestablishment of harmony was manifested by persons of every description, there still existed a great diversity of opinion as to the best means of producing so desirable a result. "There were several classes in America, who were at first exceedingly opposed to measures that

* Mrs. Warren.

that militated with the designs of administration. Some, impressed by long connexion, were intimidated by her power, and attached by affection to Britain: others, the true disciples of passive obedience, had real scruples of conscience with regard to any resistance to 'the powers that be': these, whether actuated by affection or fear, by principle or interest, formed a close combination with the colonial governors, custom-house officers, and all in subordinate departments, who hung on the court for subsistence*."

The partisan distinction of Whig and Tory was adopted at an early stage of the controversy, and introduced in every political altercation to which it gave rise. It was no uncommon occurrence for members of the same family, not only

* Mrs. Warren's American Revolution.

to espouse opposite sides of the question, but to defend the stand they had taken, with a zeal and pertinacity that ultimately sundered the tenderest ties of consanguinity. Thus, as the general ferment increased, the father was often arrayed "against the son, and the son against the father;" brothers became implacable enemies to each other; and even the fair sex were not unfrequently involved in this frightful whirlpool of political contention.

Fortunately for the subject of these memoirs, and happily for his country, his father's family, to adopt his own expression, were "staunch Whigs;" so was a majority of their fellow-towns-men, particularly the good clergyman, the reverend Mr. Gregory, before mentioned. Indeed, the clergy, of every denomination, throughout the country, with very few exceptions, warmly espoused

poused the cause of the colonies; and embraced every opportunity, both in public and private, of exhorting their flocks manfully to resist every encroachment on their rights as freemen. Their influence was great, and its effects such as might have been expected*.

The

* The clergymen of New-England, in particular, were among the strongest advocates of "Whig principles;" there were a few instances only of a separation of a minister from his people, in consequence of a disagreement in political sentiment. It was recommended by the provincial congress of Massachusetts, that on other occasions than the Sabbath, ministers of parishes should adapt their discourses to the times, and explain the nature of civil and religious liberty, and the duties of magistrates and rulers. A zealous divine, who had been compelled to abandon the people of his charge in Boston, on one occasion used, in the pulpit, at P***, the following emphatic language—" Oh, Lord, if our enemies *will* fight us, let them have fighting enough. If more soldiers are on their way hither, sink them, oh, Lord, to the bottom of the sea."—*Thacher's Journal,*

The attention of the elder Crosby, however, and that of his amiable family, were, for a time, diverted from political difficulties by domestic misfortunes. From a state of comfort and comparative affluence, he suddenly found himself reduced to poverty and distress*.

This

Journal, p. 23. "The clergy of New-England were a numerous, learned, and respectable body, who had a great ascendancy over the minds of their hearers. They connected religion and patriotism, and, in their sermons and prayers, represented the cause of America as the cause of Heaven."—*Ramsay*. "The clergy were among the first and most zealous patriots, both in speaking and writing in vindication of the rights of their country. No class of men had more deeply imbibed the spirit of their venerable ancestors, the first settlers of New-England, than they. None more generally engaged in the cause of their injured country, nor had a greater and more general influence upon the people."—*Morse's Rev.*

* Mr. Cooper frequently intimates that the parents of Harvey Birch had been suddenly "reduced from competence to poverty.—See *Spy*, Vol. i.

This unexpected reverse of fortune rendered it necessary for the son, at the age of sixteen, to leave, for the first time, the shelter of his paternal roof, and seek his own fortune in an untried world.

The painful sensations incidental to the parting of an affectionate child from indulgent parents, and the home of his childhood, are seldom forgotten by the parties concerned; but in the present instance, their impression was left with a vividness of colouring, which the lapse of more than sixty years has not been able to obliterate. In reverting to this incident, at the age of seventy-eight, the subject of this memoir expressed himself, in substance, as follows:—

“At the age of sixteen the scene changed, and I was compelled to leave the home of my childhood, to seek the protection of strangers, and depend upon my

my own exertions for support. With the scanty outfit of a change of clothes, and a few shillings in my pocket, I bade a long adieu to the friends I best loved, and the scenes of my happiest days. After receiving the blessing of my parents, with much good advice, and a small Bible, which they assured me would prove my greatest consolation in every trial and affliction that might befall me, I shouldered my pack, clasped their hands in silence—for I dared not trust my voice to say—‘*Farewell!*’—and hastened away, leaving my poor mother in an agony of tears.

“ I proceeded a short distance, with a burden at my heart much heavier than the one on my back. I then paused, and cast back a ‘longing, lingering look,’ on the spot that I could once call my home—but now no longer a home for me. I then resumed my march; and after proceeding a little further, again turned,

turned, when, for the last time, I saw my weeping mother through the window, gazing, with streaming eyes, after her exiled son. I hurried away—I could not look again. The hills which surrounded the beloved mansion, soon hid it from my view, and I felt myself alone in the world, cut off from all that I held dear; while the future appeared like a dark impenetrable cloud, scarcely illumined by a ray of hope."

Painful as these sensations must have been to a youth in his circumstances, they were soon dissipated by the novelty ever attendant on a change of scene and associations. He became an apprentice to a worthy man who resided in the eastern part of Phillipstown, since called Kent, in the county of Putnam. Here he was taught the "art and mystery of a cordwainer," and faithfully fulfilled his term of service, which terminated

minated on the fourth day of January 1771, that day completing his twenty-first year.

Let it not be supposed, however, that during all this period he was an unconcerned spectator of the political movements around him. Far from it. The sentiments which he had imperceptibly imbibed in childhood, "grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength," and now began to flow out into effective operation. Although military discipline had for several years been almost totally neglected, it now began to assume a more respectable attitude. New train-bands were organized, in one of which young Crosby soon became an active and efficient member; and he largely shared in the prevailing impression, that a most important crisis was fast approaching, for which it was the duty of every lover of his country to

to be duly and properly prepared. Nor was this impression weakened by an incident which occurred in the last year of his minority, an incident which forms a conspicuous chapter in the history of those times; we mean the massacre, in cold blood, of several citizens in the streets of Boston, by the British soldiery. This wanton act of barbarity was perpetrated in open day, on the fifth of March 1770.

No previous outrage had produced such a general alarm as the one here alluded to.—“ Yet the accident that created a resentment which emboldened the timid, determined the wavering, and awakened an energy and decision that neither the artifices of the courtier, nor the terror of the sword, could easily overcome, arose from a trivial circumstance: a sentinel, posted at the door of the custom-house, had seized and abused a boy,

a boy, for casting some opprobrious reflections on an officer of rank ; his cries collected a number of other lads, who took the childish revenge of pelting the soldier with snow-balls. The main guard, stationed in the neighbourhood of the custom-house, was informed, by some persons from thence, of the rising tumult. They immediately turned out, under the command of a captain Preston, and beat to arms. The cry of fire was raised in all parts of the town ; the mob collected, and the soldiery, from all quarters, ran through the streets, sword in hand, threatening and wounding the people, and, with every appearance of hostility, they rushed furiously to the centre of the town.

“ The soldiers, thus ready for execution, and the populace grown outrageous, the whole town was justly terrified by the unusual alarm. This naturally

rally drew out persons of higher condition, and more peaceably disposed, to inquire the cause. Their consternation can scarcely be described, when they found orders were given to fire promiscuously among the unarmed multitude. Five or six persons fell at the first fire, and several more were dangerously wounded at their own doors *."

" How slightly soever historians may pass over this event, the blood of the martyrs, right or wrong, proved to be the ' seeds of *the congregation.*' Not the battle of Lexington, or Bunker's Hill—not the surrender of Burgoyne or Cornwallis, were more important events in American history, than the battle of King-street, on the fifth of March 1770 †."

The

* Mrs. Warren's American Revolution.

† John Adams's letters to doctor Morse.

The immediate result of this outrage is well known. Captain Preston and his party were taken into custody of a civil magistrate, tried for murder, and acquitted; and all the royal troops were subsequently removed from the town to the fort, about three miles below; but the indignant feelings which it had created in every patriotic bosom were not to be appeased; the blood of their brethren cried from the ground for vengeance, and the appeal was felt in every section of the country. Like other young men of his age, Enoch Crosby ardently longed for an opportunity to mingle the blood of the assassin with that of their victims; but the hour had not yet come*.

CHAP.

* The town of Boston instituted an annual oration in commemoration of this catastrophe, and among the first orators, were such names as Hancock, Warren, and Lovell.

CHAP. III.

THE FIRST CAMPAIGN.

O, who, reclined in dastard ease,
Could hear his country's call in vain ;
Or view her banner court the breeze,
Nor sigh to join the hostile train.

WOODWORTH.

we are not writing a history of the
and progress of the revolutionary
r, but merely the memoirs of a pri-
e individual, who took an active part
that momentous contest, it is only re-
site to give a brief detail of such
ents as are connected, more or less re-
tely, with his own transactions.

The

The destruction of the tea in Boston*, the consequent port bill†, as it was called, the formation of a continental congress, and the arrival of general Gage, with an army to reduce the “ refractory colonists” to submission, are prominent features in the history of four years, from the period of our last chapter. But events of still greater importance were at hand, and anticipated with trembling anxiety.

Among the “ signs of the times” was the newly-awakened military ardour which prevailed throughout the colonies, more especially in the eastern states. In almost every town, a certain quota

* See Appendix, No. I.

† The first day of June 1774, the day when the Boston port bill began to operate, was observed, in most of the colonies, with uncommon solemnity, as a *day of fasting* and prayer.

quota of hardy youth were draughted from the militia train-bands, who voluntarily devoted a daily portion of their time to improve themselves in the military art, under officers of their own choice. These were styled "*minute men*," and stood ready to march at a moment's warning, to defend the rights of their countrymen.

At this period the younger Crosby resided at Danbury, in the state of Connecticut; and though it was not his fortune to be draughted as a minute man, he was still actuated by the same martial spirit which inspired the rest of his countrymen.

The year 1775 had opened without the occurrence of any incident of much political importance; but while thousands of bosoms were throbbing with feelings of intense interest, every eye

was directed to the capital of Massachusetts, as the quarter from whence momentous intelligence might be hourly expected.

The public mind was in this state of feverish suspense, when, in the month of April, an express arrived at Danbury, with intelligence that "upwards of four score of Americans had been inhumanly butchered on the plains of Lexington*", by a detachment of the British army; which had afterwards been put to flight by a few raw country militia; that houses had been rifled, plundered, and burnt;

* When general Washington heard of the battle of Lexington, April the nineteenth 1775, and of the slaughter of the Americans on that occasion, he said—"I grieve for the death of my countrymen; but rejoice that the British are still so determined to keep God on our side: for the smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained."—*Weems's Life of Washington.*

burnt; that neither sex, age, nor infirmity, had been respected by these ruthless marauders; and that women, with their new-born infants, had been compelled to fly naked, to escape the fury of the flames in which their houses were enwrapped*!"

The sensation produced by this intelligence, not only at Danbury, but in every other place, can be better conceived than described. The shock was electric, and the whole country flew to arms†.

D 2

"They

* The celebrated reverend John Horne (Tooke), two years after the event, was tried, in England, and found guilty of publishing an advertisement, in which it was asserted, "that the king's troops had committed *murder*, at Lexington, in America;" he was, consequently, sentenced to imprisonment for a year, to pay a fine of two hundred pounds, and to find security for his good behaviour for three years! —*Fordyce's Chronology*.

† Israel Putnam (afterwards major-general) was

"They heard—and the plough in the furrow was stay'd,
Each art was relinquished for musket and blade;
The pipe of the swain in the valley was still,
While the bugle rang loud from each fortified hill."

Within twenty-four hours after the routed "regulars" had regained the protection of their shipping, the town of Boston was invested by several thousands of our exasperated countrymen while the colonies of Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire, seemed all to be in motion. Indeed, "such was the resentment of the people, and the ardour of enterprise, that it was with difficulty they were restrained from rushing

ploughing in his field when he heard the news. He instantly stopped his team, left the plough in the furrow, mounted a horse, and in eighteen hours was on the battle-ground, a distance of one hundred miles! He then returned to Connecticut, and raised an army; the provincial congress of Massachusetts having that day voted to raise thirty thousand men.

rushing into Boston, and rashly involving their friends, in common with their enemies, in all the calamities of a town taken by storm*."

The outrage at Lexington occurred on Wednesday, the nineteenth of April; but the news did not reach the city of New-York until late on Saturday evening, nor was it generally known until Sunday morning. A meeting of the citizens immediately took place, who, without much ceremony, seized upwards of five hundred stands of muskets and bayonets belonging to his Britannic majesty.

On the following day, the keys of the custom-house were secured by the whigs, who soon made themselves masters of all the public stores in the city.

king's warehouses, in the city and at Turtle Bay.

At this time there were about three hundred regular British troops in the city, commanded by a major; and very serious apprehensions were entertained, that the confused and disorderly manner in which the foregoing transactions were conducted, would produce a rupture between the soldiers and the populace. A regular general meeting of the citizens was therefore called, and a committee of fifty appointed, who were invested with full powers to act as the exigency and circumstances of the times might require. At this meeting a set of spirited resolutions were passed, and signed by the citizens at large, in which they pledged themselves, their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour, to support their committee in all its operations, and also every measure of the

the general congress, then in session at Philadelphia.

One of the first acts of the committee was an order permitting the British troops to depart without interruption, taking with them their arms and accoutrements. In consequence of this order, the troops prepared to embark on the following day; when it was observed that they had several carts loaded with spare arms. Marinus Willett, and some others, immediately resolved to prevent this virtual infraction of their agreement; and meeting the troops in Broadway, stopped them, and without much difficulty took possession of the spare arms. With these Willett armed a new company of his own raising, with which he joined the first Canadian expedition.

The citizens of Danbury were not
D 4 backward

backward in this moment of general excitement*. A rendezvous was opened, to which the youth of the county flock'd from every quarter; and two regiments were immediately raised, one under the command of colonel (afterwards general) Wooster, and the other under the command of colonel Waterbury.

Within a few hours from the arrival of the express at Danbury, the name of Enoch Crosby was inscribed on the muster-roll of captain Benedict, followed by those of one hundred and fifty young men, all residents of that town; forming

* This excitement was not confined to any class, age, or sex. The females largely participated in the patriotic ardour that prevailed, and exhibited instances of heroic virtue, that were never surpassed by the celebrated women of Sparta. See Appendix, No. III.

forming the most efficient company in Waterbury's regiment*.

As soon as these regiments were duly organized, equipped, and reported to the provincial congress of Massachusetts, then in session at Watertown†, they impatiently waited for orders to move, and act in defence of their eastern brethren. Nor was their impatience abated

D 5

by

* It is worthy of remark, that every one of these young men returned from the northern campaign in safety; while, during their short absence, one hundred deaths occurred in the town where they belonged. Perhaps by going into danger, many of them preserved their lives.

† This legislative body had voted to raise thirty thousand men, thirteen thousand and six hundred of them to be of their own province; and that a letter and delegate be sent to the several colonies of New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. The committee of safety also sent letters to the several towns in the colony, soliciting assistance.

by the successes of their enterprising neighbours at Ticonderoga and Crown Point, on the tenth of May following*; but

* This enterprise was managed by colonels Easton, Arnold, and Allen; and so secretly, judiciously, and rapidly, was the expedition conducted, that they entered the garrison before it was known that an enemy was near it. Arnold and Allen contended for the honour of entering the fort first; but it was finally agreed that they should both go in together. They advanced abreast, and entered the fortress at the dawning of day. A sentry snapped his piece at one of them, and then retreated through the covered way to the parade. The Americans followed, and immediately drew up. The commander, surprised in his bed, was called upon to surrender the fort.—“By what authority?” exclaimed the astonished officer, rubbing his eyes, and scarcely knowing whether he was asleep or awake.

“I demand it in the name of the great Jehovah, and of the continental congress,” was the reply of colonel Allen.

The authority could not be disputed; the fort was surrendered without resistance, together with forty-eight prisoners, several brass and iron cannon, and a valuable quantity of warlike stores.

but on the news of the battle of Bunker Hill*, it was wrought up to a pitch of painful intensity. Every man longed to be in the field, and share in the dangers and glory that awaited the champions of liberty. This patriotic ardour was shortly to be gratified.

The continental congress was now in session at Philadelphia; and at this period the importance of possessing the Canadas, strongly impressed the minds of gentlemen of the first penetration, private citizens as well as the representatives of the several colonies, in that august legislative body. It was thought a favourable crisis to make the attempt, "when the flower of the British troops, then in America, were shut up in Boston; and when the governors of the southern provinces, interrupted in their

D 6 negociations

* See Appendix, No. III.

negociations with the Indians, had taken refuge on board the king's ships, either from real or imagined personal danger*." It was therefore determined to employ colonel Waterbury's regiment, together with two regiments of New-York militia, in this important and hazardous service; the whole force consisting of about three thousand men, under the command of generals Schuyler and Montgomery.

The reader may easily imagine with what alacrity our hero and his fellow-soldiers obeyed the orders of their superiors to "strike their tents and march away." The language of each heart was,

" Strike up the drums; and let the tongue of war
Plead for our interest."

They

* Mrs. Warren's American Revolution.

They were ordered to the city of New-York, where they were joined by the New-York militia, one corps of which was commanded by the gallant Willett; but encamped about two miles out of town, near the spot now occupied as Vauxhall Garden*. After remaining in this position about three weeks, they removed to Harlaem, and encamped in the village. From thence they took boats, and proceeded up the Hudson to Albany, on their way to Lake Champlain.

General Schuyler being detained at Albany,

* In the year 1775, the city of New-York (we mean the compact part of it) extended no farther north than Partition-street, now called Fulton-street, near St. Paul's Church. Beyond this there were only a few scattering houses, with here and there a handsome country seat. It was considered a pleasant ramble "out of town," to go to "*the fields*," where the City Hall now stands.

Albany, for the purpose of negotiating an Indian treaty, his coadjutor, the intrepid Montgomery, led on his gallant band of patriots to Ticonderoga, where they arrived on the twenty-first day of August*. As soon as a sufficient number

* The fortress of Ticonderoga, so often mentioned in the history of the American wars, is now a heap of ruins, though many of the walls are so entire as to exhibit proofs of the excellency of their construction, and of the plan of the works. It was built by the French in 1756, on a point of land formed by the junction of Lake George Creek with Lake Champlain, in N. lat. 43 deg. 50 min. and 34 min. E. long. from New-York: elevation, above Lake Champlain, one hundred and ten feet; above tide waters, one hundred and ninety-six feet. The name is derived to us from the Indians, Frenchified; and signified noisy—Che-on-der-oga; probably in allusion to the water. But the French called it Fort Carillon. It was a place of great strength, both by nature and art. On three sides it is surrounded by water, and about half of the other side is occupied by a deep swamp; and the line of defence was completed.

ber of boats could be provided to convey the army down Lake Champlain, they embarked for *Isle aux Noix*, lying about eleven miles north of the lake, in the river Sorel, which connects the waters of Champlain with that of the St. Lawrence. On reaching Isle La Motte, they were rejoined by general Schuyler, who had prepared an address to the inhabitants of Canada, inviting them to join the standard of liberty,

and

pleted by the French, with the erection of a breast-work, nine feet high, on the only assailable ground. In 1758, general Abercrombie, with the British army, assailed this fortress; was defeated July 9, with the loss of one thousand nine hundred and forty-one men. But it was surrendered to general Amherst, in July of the following year. It was the first fortress carried by the arms of America, in the war that established our independence; it was taken by surprise, by colonel Allen, May 10, 1775, and retained till July 1777, when it was evacuated, on the approach of general Burgoyne with the British army.

and unite in the common cause of America.

From Isle aux Noix the army proceeded to St. Johns, the first British post in Canada*. During their passage down the river, the soldiers were directed to hold themselves constantly in readiness for defence, as it was reasonably apprehended that they might be assailed by the Indians from the woods which skirted the stream.

On effecting a landing, at a short distance from fort St. Johns, the assailants, about one thousand in number, immediately formed in full view of the garrison, and prepared for hostile operations. Their movements, at this juncture, are thus described by Crosby herself:—

"We

About one hundred and fifteen miles north of Ticonderoga.

"We were now in full view of the enemy, who kept up a constant cannonading; which only caused us to dodge now and then, merely serving to get us into a fighting mood. We were soon ordered to advance; but had only proceeded a few rods, when we were suddenly attacked by a body of Indians in ambush, who, after a short contest, were glad to show us a specimen of their speed in running*.

"Our

* Ramsay says, that "the British pickets were driven into the fort. The environs were then reconnoitred, and the fortifications were found to be much stronger than had been suspected. This induced the calling of a council of war, which recommended a retreat to Isle aux Noix." Mrs. Warren says, that "an unexpected attack from a large body of Indians obliged them to retreat to their former post, and await the arrival of reinforcements." The latter account is in strict conformity with Mr. Crosby's own statement. Both, however, may be correct.

" Our sport, however, was soon interrupted, by an order to *halt!*—when, after burying the dead, and providing for the wounded, a council of war was held by the officers, in which it was determined to return to Isle aux Noix, throw a boom across the channel, and erect works for its defence.

" In the mean time, a breastwork was ordered to be thrown up on the spot where we stood ; and accordingly every one went to work with alacrity. While some were felling trees, and preparing timber for this purpose, and others throwing up the earth to form a parapet, we were constantly annoyed by the shells thrown from the fort. This circumstance tended to retard our operations ; for when a shell rose in the air, every one would stop working to watch its course, and ascertain if it would fall near him. I must confess that I felt no particular

ticular affection for these unwelcome intruders, but rather regarded them as ‘messengers of evil;’ still, however, notwithstanding the cold reception which I gave these warm-hearted visitors, I never thought of the fashionable expedient of ‘not being at home,’ (in other words, of ‘dodging them,’) until I heard some one exclaim—‘Look out! Take care there!’ when I looked up, and saw one descending towards the very spot where I was standing. I threw myself flat on the ground, and it just passed over me.—‘A miss is as good as a mile,’ thought I, as I sprang from my recumbent posture, and resumed my labour. But after that I kept one eye upon the enemy.

“Our general, however, gave us some instructions on this subject. He advised us never to change our position until the shell was directly over us; and if

If it should then appear that it had lost its projectile force, and was falling, 'it would be well enough to step on one side.' He was a noble fellow, that Montgomery*; every soldier in the army loved him like a brother.

When

Montgomery was a warm-hearted Irishman, and war was his profession. He had been a captain of grenadiers in the seventeenth regiment of British troops, of which Moncton was colonel. In 1779, he quitted his regiment, though in a fair way of preferment, because he disapproved of the sentiments of the ministry, and had imbibed an affection for America, which he viewed as the rising seat of arts and freedom. A sentiment of a still more tender nature might have had some influence in this transaction, as he soon afterward married the beautiful and accomplished daughter of judge Livingston, of New-York. His many amiable qualities had procured him an uncommon share of private affection, and his great abilities an equal proportion of public esteem. His name was mentioned in parliament with singular respect; the minister himself acknowledged his worth, while he reprobated the cause he had espoused. He concluded

"When the breastwork was completed, which was in a much shorter time

cluded an involuntary panegyric by exclaiming—
"Curse on his virtues! they have undone his country." When he embraced his amiable lady for the last time, on his departure for Canada, and bade her a tender farewell, his parting words were—"You shall never blush for your Montgomery!" She never did; but a nation wept his untimely fall.

"Yes, yes, I go," he whispered soft,
 In freedom's cause my sword to wield;
Columbia's banner waves aloft,
 And glory calls me to the field."

Then foremost on the foe he prest,
 While war's rude tempest wildly roar'd,
Till, gushing from the hero's breast,
 The purple tide in torrents pour'd.

He fell; and, oh! what fancies stole
 Through memory's vista, bright and warm;
Till one lov'd image o'er his soul
 Came, like an angel, in the storm.
But loudly swell'd the bugle's blast,
 His hand instinctive grasp'd the steel;
Again it swell'd—but all was past,
 The warrior's breast had ceas'd to feel.

WOODWORTH.

time than might have been expected, considering the circumstances under which we laboured, we prepared for a retreat, as this shew of hostility was merely a finesse, to divert the enemy's attention. As soon as night set in, and every object was shrouded in darkness, we were ordered to decamp with as little noise as possible. We accordingly took our boats, and returned up the river, leaving the enemy to wonder at our sudden and mysterious exit. On the following day we reached Isle aux Noix, where we remained two weeks, waiting for reinforcements."

Soon after this event, an extreme bad state of health induced general Schuyler to retire to Ticonderoga, and the sole command devolved on general Montgomery. Immediately on the arrival of his expected reinforcement, this intrepid and enterprising officer returned to the vicinity

vicinity of St. Johns, and opened a battery against it on the seventeenth day of September.—“Ammunition, however, was so scarce, that the siege could not be carried on with any prospect of speedy success; the general therefore detached a small body of troops, to attempt the reduction of Fort Chamblee, only six miles distant. Success attended this enterprise; and, by its surrender, six tons of gunpowder were obtained, which enabled the general to prosecute the siege of St. Johns with vigour. The garrison, though straitened for provisions, persevered in defending themselves with unabating fortitude.”

The severe duties of so arduous a campaign, the frequent skirmishes, marches and counter-marches, and constant exposure to sudden changes of weather, in the inclement month of October, were not without

* Ramsay's American Revolution.

without their effects on the health of the soldiers. Among others, Crosby was seized with a severe indisposition, and removed to the hospital at Isle aux Noix; but his impatience to share in the dangers and glory of the approaching contest, would not permit him to remain under the surgeon's hands but a few days, when he returned to the army, in direct opposition to the wishes of his medical adviser.

In relating this incident, Mr. Crosby says—" I returned against the surgeon's advice, and contrary to the expectations of my captain; for as the time for which we had enlisted had nearly expired, he had no idea that any of us invalids would rejoin the army. As soon as he saw me, he accosted me in a tone of unaffected surprise—' Halloo, Crosby ! have you got back ? What induced you to return before your health was restored ?

I never

I never expected to see you here again; so you might as well have gone home. You have not had time to get well; for you look more like a scarecrow than a soldier fit for duty.' I replied, that I wished to be with him; and that if I was not able to *fight*, I might at least *frighten* the enemy, as he thought I looked like a scarecrow. At this remark he laughed heartily, and told me, that if I wished so much to fight, that I should soon be gratified. Accordingly, in the course of the day, we had a severe engagement, in which we proved victorious; and, to my great satisfaction, I was one of the number that marched into the fort to the tune of Yankee Doodle, and took charge of the prisoners*."

VOL. I.

E

Our

* Major Preston, the commanding officer at St. Johns, surrendered that fortress on receiving honourable terms of capitulation. "By those it was agreed,



Our invalid soon recovered his health, and continued in the service, until the army took possession of Montreal, which they did, without resistance, on the twelfth of November. His term of enlistment having now expired, he proposed to return once more to the tranquil scenes of his childhood. He was warmly solicited by his commandant to remain with the army, and even promised promotion if he would comply ; but being strongly impressed with the idea that a more extensive field for usefulness

agreed, that the garrison should march out with the honours of war ; that the officers and privates should ground their arms on the plain ; the officers to keep their side-arms, and their fire-arms be reserved for them, and that the people of the garrison should retain their effects. About five hundred regulars, and one hundred Canadians, became prisoners to the provincials. They also acquired thirty-nine pieces of cannon, seven mortars, and two howitzers, and about eight hundred stand of arms. Among the cannon were many brass field-pieces, an article of which the Americans were nearly destitute."

fulness would soon be opened in the vicinity of New-York, he persisted in his intention of leaving the army. In company with several others, whose term had also expired (having enlisted for six months only), he embarked in a small schooner for Crown Point*, where he arrived about the first of December.

E 2

" From

* On Lake Champlain, about twelve miles north of Ticonderoga. The celebrated fortress of Crown Point, one of the best ever erected within the present territory of the United States, gave its name to this town, which contains the ruins of the fort. Along the lake, the surface is pretty level, but high mountains pervade the western part. The fort itself is on a point of land jutting far into the water northward, and washed by a considerable bay on the west, called West Bay. This fortress was first erected by the French, in 1731, and called Fort St. Frederick. In 1759, it was surrendered to the British troops under general Amherst, and was occupied by them until May 14, 1775, when it fell into the hands of the Americans (as stated in a preceding note), but was evacuated in 1776, and again fell

"From thence," says he, "our little party proceeded on foot to Ticonderoga, where we procured a small boat, and rowed up the river which connects Lake George with Champlain. On reaching the falls, however, we were compelled to draw our boat on shore, and drag it on the ground, across a neck of land about a mile in width. In this manner, with immense labour and fatigue, and suffering greatly from the inclemency of the

fell into the hands of the British. The walls were of wood and earth, twenty-two feet thick, and sixteen feet in height; it was about fifteen hundred yards square, surrounded by a deep and broad ditch, cut in a solid granite rock, with immense labour. On the north is a double row of strong stone barracks, of a capacity to contain two thousand troops. On the same side was a gate, a strong drawbridge, and a covered way to the margin of the lake. The whole are now in ruins, and the outworks, of which there were some pretty extensive, are little else than heaps of rubbish, barely sufficient to revive remembrance.—*Spafford's Gazetteer.*

the season, we reached Sabbath-day Point*, in Lake George. Here, however,

E 3

ever,

* So called, from its having been the scene of a bloody massacre on the Sabbath day. A large party of whites had encamped there, without suspecting an enemy to be near them; but the Indians came upon them suddenly, and cut them off, almost to a man. Very few escaped to tell the disastrous story. We have often heard the tradition, but are not in possession of the particulars. Lake George, of course, could not have been attractive to our travellers in the middle of winter; but in any other season it is the most beautiful sheet of clear water in America, perhaps in the world. It is about thirty-three miles in length, and nearly two in breadth. Its northern extremity approaches within two and a half miles of Lake Champlain, and the outlet is little more than three miles long, where it is said to descend one hundred and fifty-seven feet. Lake George is surrounded by high mountains, and is excelled in romantic beauties by no similar waters in the world. Its water is very deep, the bottom so clean, that neither winds or freshets render it turbid, and it abounds with the finest of fish for the angler. Salmon trout are taken,

ever, no friendly shelter awaited us; and though almost perishing with cold, we could obtain no better quarters than an old pig-stye. This miserable substitute for a tent was soon filled with brush and straw; when, with wet feet and shivering bodies (all of us being thinly clad), we laid ourselves down to rest from the fatigues of the day."

At early dawn, on the following morning, this intrepid little party resumed their unpleasant journey; and, after several days of fatigue and suffering, without meeting any remarkable adventure, at length reached their respective homes in safety.

After a few weeks repose had restored Crosby to his usual health and strength, he resumed the peaceful occupation of shoe-ken, weighing twenty pounds and upwards, with a great variety of other fish.

shoe-making, in his former situation at Danbury. Here he continued until the twenty-fifth of January 1776, when a sudden gloom was spread over the whole country, by the disastrous news, that his beloved general, the brave and amiable Montgomery, had fallen before the walls of Quebec, on the last day of December. Even at this distant period (1828), Mr. Crosby cannot speak on this subject without emotion. The soldiers almost adored Montgomery ; and there was scarcely an individual that had ever served under him, but shed tears for his untimely fate. Crosby was so much affected on first hearing of the melancholy event, that he found it difficult to pursue an occupation that gave so much opportunity for painful reflections ; he therefore sought relief in change of scenery, and paid a visit to his friends in Kent, where we will leave him for the present, while we take a glance at the

state of the country, on the opening of the eventful year 1776. In doing this we shall discover the *causes* which prompted the subject of this memoir to assume a *new character* in the revolutionary drama—that of a SPY, on the “ Neutral Ground.”

CHAP. IV.

THE TORIES.

Know, villains, when such paltry slaves presume
To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
They're thrown neglected by : but, if it fails,
They're sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.

ADDISON.

THE winter of 1775-6 passed tardily away, and no military movements of consequence were made on either side. The British troops remained shut up in Boston, under the command of general William Howe, the perfidious Gage having sailed for England. The continental army in the vicinity of Boston was

rapidly decreasing, by the expiration of the short period for which the soldiers had enlisted *. Although Congress had exerted all its energies to create a new army, still the recruiting service went on very slowly, and no active operations were

* At the close of the year 1775, the continental army near Boston was reduced to a very critical situation, being obliged to substitute new raised troops and militia, in the place of those who had been in service five or six months; and this exchange was made within musket-shot of the enemy's lines. During part of this period, their numbers were not sufficient to man the lines, nor was there powder enough in camp to furnish *four rounds a man!* They had only four small brass cannon and a few old honey-comb iron pieces, with their trunnions broken off; and these were ingeniously bedded in timbers, in the same manner as that of stocking a musket. These machines were extremely unwieldy and inconvenient, requiring much skill and labour to elevate and depress them. Had the enemy in Boston been made acquainted with the situation of their besiegers, the consequences might have been unpleasant.—*Thacher's Journal.*

were attempted until the beginning of March, when a threatened bombardment, from the heights of Dorchester*, compelled general Howe to evacuate Boston, and thus relieved the suffering inhabitants from their distress and privations †. The British army was hastily

E 6 embarked

* See Appendix, No. IV.

+ The distresses of the inhabitants of Boston, during the memorable winter of 1775-6, exceed description. They had been promised permission to leave the town, if they would deliver up their arms, which were accordingly deposited in Faneul-Hall, to the care of the select-men. But no sooner were the citizens completely disarmed, than Gage violated his agreement, and refused to let them depart. Nor was general Howe, his successor, any more lenient; for he issued a proclamation, prohibiting all persons attempting to quit the town, without a written licence, on penalty of *military execution*; and, if they escaped, they were to be proceeded against as *traitors*, and their effects to be forfeited. The consequences may be easily conceived. That ill-fated town was a scene of *famine* and

embarked on board the ships and transports then lying in the harbour, together with a host of *tories* and *refugees*, who claimed the protection of general Howe, and abandoned their bleeding country. The fleet proceeded to Halifax, where the loyal fugitives were landed, and where Howe determined to remain, until the arrival of his brother from England, with the expected reinforcements, should enable him to pursue the war with vigour.

Immediately after this joyful event, Washington sent on the continental army, in detachments, to New-York; and as soon as he had made some necessary

and distress; the inhabitants were almost in a state of starvation, for the want of food and fuel. Totally destitute of vegetables, flour, and fresh provisions, they were actually obliged to feed on horse-flesh; while the pews of churches, old houses, and timbered wharves, were demolished for fuel.—*Thacher's Journal.*

sary arrangements for the future defence of the eastern states, he hastened on himself, and made every possible preparation for the reception of the expected enemy, who did not arrive at Sandy Hook until the twenty-ninth of June.

After waiting at Halifax two or three months, for the arrival of his brother, lord Howe, with his "motley mercenaries from Hesse, Hanover, and Brunswick," sir William became impatient of delay, and set sail for New-York, accompanied by admiral Shuldham. Here, however, he found the continental army so strongly posted on Long Island and the island of New-York, that he did not immediately attempt any thing of consequence, but landed his troops at Staten Island, and there awaited the arrival of his brother.

In the mean time, the declaration of
INDEPENDENCE

INDEPENDENCE was adopted by Congress, and published to the nation. Four days after its passage, it was read to the army at New-York, by whom it was received with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of joy. A leaden statue of his majesty, George the Third, was immediately thrown down, and run into bullets, for the reception of lord Howe; and his host of mercenaries, who arrived four days afterwards, with a formidable squadron.

After amusing, or rather insulting, the American government with an inadmissible proposition of reconciliation, the enemy made preparations to act with vigour. Having been joined by "the repulsed troops from the southward*", and the broken squadron under the command of sir Peter Parker; by a régiment from St. Augustine, and another from

* See first note, in Chapter VIII.

from Pensacola; also, by a few troops from St. Vincent, some small additions from other posts, and a considerable party of *tories* from New Jersey, and from the environs of Philadelphia and New-York, which, by great industry, had been collected and embodied by governor Tryon," the whole hostile army crossed the channel, and landed on Long Island, where they were posted, in detachments, on the south side, from one end of the island to the other, separated from the American army by a ridge of hills, covered with woods.

Tryon, it will be recollectcd, was the last governor who presided at New-York, under the crown of England. He had formerly been governor of North Carolina, where his severities had rendered his very name universally detested. He, of course, entered with great zeal into all the measures of the British government;

government; and endeavoured, with art, influence, and intrigue (of which he was perfect master), to induce the city of New-York, and the inhabitants under his government, to submit quietly, and not unite with the other colonies in their plans of opposition. Failing in this purpose, and becoming apprehensive for his own personal safety, he left the seat of government, and put himself at the head of a body of *tories*, whom he assisted in butchering their fellow-countrymen, and committing the most shocking enormities on the defenceless inhabitants of New Jersey, and wherever else he could penetrate. He constantly held out such flattering inducements for these wretches to join him, that scarcely a day passed without his receiving recruits from some quarter.

At this period the “Committee of Safety” for the colony of New-York, consisted

consisted of Messrs. Jay, Platt, Duer, and Sackett—gentlemen who have since held conspicuous situations in the government of their emancipated country. It of course became the policy of this committee to counteract, as far as in them lay, the arts and intrigues of the wily Tryon. For this purpose, they exercised the utmost vigilance to prevent the *tories* from joining the standard of the enemy, and felt perfectly justified in resorting to coercive measures to effect this desirable object. In fact, so daring had become their opposition and outrages, that any lenity extended towards them would have been cruelty to the friends of liberty, as the following facts will amply demonstrate.

A gang of these unprincipled wretches, who had associated in New-York for the purpose of joining the British army, had even concerted a plan to assassinate Washington,

Washington, and some other officers; and while our army was engaged with the enemy, to blow up the magazines. The mayor of the city, and an armourer who was employed in making rifles for the *tories*, together with several others, were taken into custody, and committed to prison. The mayor, on examination, confessed that he had received money from Tryon to pay the armourer for the rifles. Two of Washington's body-guards were confederates in this nefarious scheme; but a third, to whom the secret was confided, honestly disclosed the information. Several of these miscreants were tried and convicted, and two or three were executed.

About the same time, a similar plot was brought to light in Albany, by the confession of two *tories*. Their plan was to set the city on fire, and blow up the magazine. In consequence of this premature

premature exposal, some of the conspirators were apprehended, and the meditated plot frustrated *.

But the most dangerous and culpable of these internal enemies, were those who had the effrontery and address to pass themselves off for whigs. One of these was doctor Benjamin Church, who had long sustained a high reputation as a patriot and a son of liberty. He had been a member of the house of representatives of Massachusetts, and was afterwards appointed surgeon-general and director of the hospitals. Previous to the evacuation of Boston, however, he was detected in a traitorous correspondence with the enemy—tried, convicted, and expelled from the house of representatives, and ordered to be “closely confined in some secure gaol in Connecticut,

* See Thacher's Journal, p. 64.

ticut, without the use of pen, ink, or paper; and that no person be allowed to converse with him, except in the presence and hearing of a magistrate, or the sheriff of the county." After all this, however, he was finally permitted to depart from the country. He and his family embarked for the West Indies; but the vessel foundered at sea, and all were lost.*

A man by the name of Ledwitz, who by his own solicitation had been appointed lieutenant-colonel in the continental army, was also detected in a traitorous correspondence with the infamous Tryon. He intrusted his letter to one Steen, an honest German, to be conveyed to New-York; but considering it his duty to expose the perfidy, the messenger delivered it to Washington.

By

* See Thacher's Journal, p. 38.

By this criminal act the perfidious wretch had forfeited his life, according to the articles of war; but on his trial by a court-martial, his life was saved by the casting vote of a militia officer, who pretended some *scruples of conscience!* He was, however, cashiered, and declared incapable of holding any military office in the American service*.

But it is unnecessary to multiply instances. Enough has been said to show that the *tories* were the most insidious, virulent, and implacable enemies, with which the friends of liberty had to contend, in the fearful struggle which secured the independence of these United States. Internal secret enemies are always more dangerous than open avowed foes in the field; and it ought to be considered as a signal and remarkable interposition

* See Thacher's Journal, p. 64.

position of Divine Providence, that their vile machinations were so frequently defeated. But Providence always operates by instruments; and among the most efficient, patriotic, disinterested, and successful agents, in counteracting the meditated treachery and machinations of internal secret enemies, was Enoch Crosby, as will be sufficiently shewn in the following pages.

CHAP. V.

SECRET SERVICES.

What is it that you would impart to me?
If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honour in one eye, and death i' the other,
And I will look on both indifferently:
For let the gods so speed me, as I love
The name of honour more than I fear death.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE unfortunate battle of Long-Island, the consequent retreat of the American army, and the subsequent occupation of the city of New-York by the British, under general Howe, are events familiar to every reader. The first occurred

• on

on the twenty-seventh of August 1776, and the last on the fifteenth of the following month. The affair at Kipp's Bay*, the contest at Harlaem Heights, and the landing of the enemy at Throg's Neck, in Westchester county, followed each other in rapid succession, and excited the most lively interest throughout the country.

It was during the occurrence of these important transactions, that Crosby determined to rejoin the standard of his country. Several months' repose had recruited his health and strength, after the fatigue and sufferings of his northern expedition. He was now in the twenty-seventh year of his age, with every personal and mental qualification requisite for acts of enterprise, hazard, and address. In height he was nearly

six

* See Chapter VI. third paragraph.

six feet, with broad shoulders, full chest, and a liberal share of bone and muscle, but not a superabundance of flesh *. Active, athletic, and inured to hardships, he determined no longer to indulge in inglorious ease, while his brave countrymen were in arms, in defence of their rights and liberties, and while persons of every age, sex, and condition, were cheerfully submitting to unexampled privations, for the sake of political freedom †. He therefore resumed his knapsack, shouldered his musket, and, once more bidding adieu to the rural scenes of Kent, he bent his course to-

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wards

* In person, the pedlar was a man above the middle height; spare, but full of bone and muscle. His eyes were grey, sunken, restless; and, for the few moments that they dwelt on the countenances of those with whom he conversed, seemed to read the very soul.—*Spy, Vol. i.*

† See Appendix, No. V.

wards the head-quarters of the American army.

It was towards the close of a warm day, in the month of September 1776, that he reached a wild and romantic ravine, in the county of Westchester*. Here he fell in with a gentleman, who appeared to be travelling in the same direction, and with whom he soon entered

* Westchester County is situated on the east side of the Hudson, immediately above York Island. It is joined to Putnam County on the north, and Connecticut on the east; comprising about four hundred and eighty square miles. It enjoys a direct communication with the Hudson on the west, and with the Sound on the south-east. Its surface, in some parts, is rugged and mountainous; in others, beautifully undulating, and luxuriantly fertile; the whole well watered, and diversified with scenery that is truly picturesque and romantic. The centre of this county, lying between the two hostile armies, during the revolutionary war, was called the "NEUTRAL GROUND."

tered into familiar conversation. Among other questions, the stranger inquired if Crosby was going "down below?" to which he readily answered in the affirmative. The interrogator appeared pleased with this reply, and let fall some expressions which plainly indicated that he had "mistaken his man," supposing Crosby to be a loyalist, on his way to join the British army. The latter instantly perceived the advantage which might be derived from this mistake, and suffered his new companion to remain under the erroneous impression.

"Are you not aware," said the stranger, "that it is somewhat hazardous to go down alone? The rebels are on the alert, and you may meet with obstacles that will not be very pleasant."

"Indeed!" returned Crosby, with much affected concern. "What course would you then advise me to pursue?"

"I will tell you, sir. I reside but a short distance from hence; go with me, and make my house your home for a few days, when you can go down with a company that is now forming for that purpose."

"That is indeed a most fortunate circumstance," replied Crosby; "and I accept the hospitable invitation, with as much cordiality as it appears to have been given. This arrangement will relieve my mind from a load of anxiety, and I shall feel myself under a weight of obligation to you."

"Not at all, sir; it is a pleasure to serve those who, in these trying times, retain their integrity, and remain faithful to his majesty. I am happy to know that many of my neighbours are of this class; and though the vigilance of Jay, Duer, Platt, Sackett, and their deluded instruments, compel my friends to be very circumspect in their movements, there

there is no doubt of their being able to complete their arrangements, and reaching the army without molestation. They will very gladly receive you as a member, and in their company you will be perfectly safe."

"I have no doubt of it," returned Crosby; "and am impatient to be introduced to their acquaintance."

"Yonder is my residence; and you need refreshment and repose. Rest yourself to-night, and in the morning your wish shall be gratified."

Crosby readily acceded to this proposal, and followed his new acquaintance into a small enclosure, that led to a neat farm-house at a short distance from the road. Here he was received with a cordial welcome, and furnished with such refreshments as his situation required. After supper, the evening was spent in conversing on a variety of subjects, that

naturally grew out of the critical state of the times at that period; such as may easily be imagined to have passed between a covert whig, anxious to obtain intelligence, and a real tory, who had no suspicion of the character of his guest.

Having had a comfortable night's rest, and a substantial breakfast, Crosby reminded the host of his promise to introduce him to such of his neighbours as were faithful to the royal cause, particularly those who were about forming a company to join the British army.—“I am anxious,” said he, “to become acquainted with the agents, before I join in the enterprise. It is not every man of fair professions that can be safely trusted; I like to see and judge for myself.”

The reasonableness of this request induced

duced his kind entertainer to comply with it without delay. Crosby was accordingly introduced to a number of persons, on many of whom the shadow of suspicion had never before lighted, they having ever professed to be warm adherents of the American cause. Every one received him with cordiality, and conversed on political subjects without the least disguise or restraint; so completely had they been thrown off their guard by their confidence in the person who had recommended him. He found the whole of them to be most inveterate and virulent in their hostility to the friends of liberty, and was convinced that he could not render a greater service to his bleeding country, than by counteracting the machinations of her most dangerous (because most secret and insidious) foes.

Accordingly, at the expiration of
F 4 three

three days, during which time he had made himself master of all the information in their power to communicate (and some of them held secret correspondence with the enemy), he told his host, that he felt too impatient to join the army, to wait any longer the dilatory movements of this company; he was therefore resolved to proceed alone, and to trust to fortune and his own address for protection. After vainly exhausting every argument to dissuade his guest from so hazardous a project, the other finally consented; and Crosby resumed his knapsack and musket, took leave of his entertainer, and was soon out of sight on the road to New-York.

In this direction, however, he did not travel long; but took advantage of an abrupt angle in the road, to change his course; when leaving the highway, he plunged into a thicket, and pursued his way,

way, through a pathless tract of country, in a north-western direction.

He had heard of a Mr. Young, who resided within eight miles from White Plains, and knew him, from reputation, to be a warm friend to the American cause; with him, therefore, he determined to consult on the proper steps to be taken with respect to the arrest of these traitors to their country. Owing, however, to the circuitous route he had adopted, to avoid the observation of his late associates, night had set in before his journey was half accomplished; and it was with extreme difficulty that he "groped his darkling way" through the wild and broken region that lay between him and the object of his pursuit. Hills were to be climbed, thickets penetrated, and streams forded, before he could gain the road which was to conduct him to mansion of Mr. Young.

All these difficulties, however, were at length happily surmounted; but it was near midnight when he reached the end of his journey. Fortunately, the master of the house was still up and alone, his family having all retired.

Crosby was a stranger, and the hour unseasonable; but such circumstances were not unusual in those "stirring times." He was promptly admitted, and politely invited to take a seat; when Mr. Young, fixing on him a searching gaze (as if anxious to penetrate into the secret recesses of his heart, and there to read his real character), intimated that he was ready to learn the purport of his untimely visit.

Crosby was aware that the inhabitants in that section of the country, had lost much of their former confidence in each other, and knew not whom to trust; he therefore

therefore hastened to explain the object of his intrusion, and relieve his host from the evident embarrassment his suspicions had created *.

"I understand, sir," said Crosby, "that you are a friend to the 'upper party †.' Give me leave to ask if I have been correctly informed? Is it true?"

"Yes, sir," promptly replied the
F 6 other;

* The county of Westchester, after the British had obtained possession of the island of New-York, became common ground, in which both parties continued to act for the remainder of the war of the revolution. A large proportion of its inhabitants, either restrained by their attachments, or influenced by their fears, affected a neutrality they did not always feel.—*Spy, Vol. i.*

+ As respects *location*, the Americans were always the "upper" party, in the vicinity of New-York; for while they retained possession of the city, the British were still below them, at Staten Island. The same relative position continued on their retreat through the county of Westchester.

other ; “ it *is* true. I *am* a friend to my country ; and am not afraid or ashamed to avow it, to friend or foe.”

“ I have always understood, sir, that such was your character, and rejoice to find that I am not deceived. Under this impression, I have taken the liberty to wait on you, for the purpose of communicating information that may prove beneficial to the American cause.”

“ Go on, sir,” returned the host, in a tone bordering on sternness, and without relaxing his features. “ Proceed ; I am all attention.”

“ Do you know, sir, that there are traitors around you ?—that even some of your neighbours are secretly concerting plans, to assist the common enemy in plundering and butchering their own brethren and fellow-countrymen ?”

“ I am well aware,” returned Young, with a sigh, “ that there are too many who feel secretly disposed to aid the cause

cause of the enemy. But they dare not openly avow it."

" That is true, sir."

" Oh that I knew them!" continued the host, with increasing animation, as he rose from his seat. " Oh that I could designate them—point them out—name them! They should soon be linked together, by closer and stronger ties than those which now connect them."

" Then, sir," replied Crosby, with confidence, rising on his feet, and approaching the other, " I have news that will interest you. I have just left a company of these wretches, after having spent three days with them, and know all their plans. Their intention is to join the 'lower party,' with whom they now hold a secret correspondence, and raise their parricidal hands against their bleeding country."

" Is it possible!"

" It

"It is most true, sir. I know them all—have visited their families—attended their secret meetings—assisted them in maturing their nefarious plans."

"Indeed! Then you yourself—"

"Understand me," interrupted Crosby; "I have levelled this musket too often at the open and avowed enemies of my country, to be on terms of intimacy with her secret foes, except for the purpose of discovering and preventing their contemplated treachery."

Here Crosby gave a particular detail of the circumstances connected with his introduction to the members of this hopeful confederacy — particulars with which the reader is already acquainted; and as he proceeded, the countenance of his auditor gradually brightened. As soon as he had finished, the latter seized him eagerly by the hand, and, with sparkling eyes, exclaimed—"Is this true, upon the honour of a man?"

"It

"It is true, by Heaven!" returned the other; "and if you will assist me with your advice and co-operation, eight-and-forty hours shall not elapse until you are convinced by the testimony of your own eyes."

"Come on then, my good fellow!" exclaimed Young, seizing his hat. "The Committee of Safety are at White Plains, and thither we must proceed immediately. Follow me quickly, and I will be your pilot."

Crosby was not backward in complying with this injunction, though already much fatigued by his recent journey, but promptly followed his hasty guide on this midnight excursion. Fences, rocks, and streams, were but slight impediments

"To hearts resolved, and limbs inured to toil;"
and before two o'clock they found themselves at the end of their journey, in the
village

village of White Plains, and in presence of the honourable John Jay, one of the most vigilant of these watchful guardians of the public safety.

This gentleman being made acquainted with the foregoing particulars, dismissed his informants with a request that they would remain near at hand, for further instructions, as he intended, at early dawn, to convene the committee, and hold a consultation on the important subject.

Were we writing a romance, instead of an authentic narrative of events which actually occurred, and could we command the descriptive pen of our inimitable Cooper, here would be the place to introduce a series of incidents which attended (or might have attended) the subsequent movements of our two nocturnal adventurers. Their difficulty in procuring

procuring comfortable quarters for the remainder of the night—a description of the village inn, where they finally succeeded in rousing the lazy landlord from his slumbers—the motley group which lay snoring on the floor of the bar-room—a portraiture of the florid-faced landlady, and the various incidents resulting from this unexpected interruption of her arrangements for the night—would, all together, form sufficient materials for an interesting chapter. But as nothing of the kind has been promised in our title-page, the reader must rest contented with a plain, unadorned narrative of such facts as our hero can actually remember, at the advanced age of seventy-eight.

The committee were convened at an early hour on the following morning, when Crosby was summoned before them, to recapitulate the particulars of his

his recent adventure. After hearing his statement, and consulting on the most proper steps to be taken in the business, Crosby was requested to hold himself in readiness to accompany a detachment of Rangers * (on the ensuing night), to the place where his recent associates were in the habit of holding their secret cabals.

The enterprise was crowned with complete success. Without dreaming of molestation, these vile conspirators found themselves suddenly surrounded by a troop of horse, and compelled to surrender. Thus, in less time than our hero had specified, his friend Young had the satisfaction of seeing the whole cavalcade, linked together in pairs, safely conducted to prison, to the tune of the “rogue’s march.”

The

* These rangers were a company of mounted men, reserved expressly for exigencies of this kind, whenever they should occur, and to go wherever the committee should direct.

The successful result of this enterprise induced the committee to believe that the cause in which they had so zealously embarked, might be highly promoted, by engaging a person of Crosby's acuteness and address in similar secret services. The proposition was accordingly made to him at a confidential interview.

"It was your intention," said the chairman, "again to serve your country as a private in the ranks. Such a resolution, in a person of your character and abilities, could only have originated in motives of the purest patriotism. But you must now be convinced that much greater services may be rendered by pursuing a different, though certainly not a less hazardous course. There is a sufficient number of brave fellows to repulse our open and avowed enemy. The greatest danger which now threatens

ens this suffering country, is from her internal foes—those secret enemies who, in their midnight cabals, are plotting our destruction. He who succeeds in bringing such wretches to justice, deserves infinitely more of his country, than he who fights her battles. Are you willing to engage in such service?"

"I am willing to encounter any danger, and make any sacrifice (my honour only excepted), in the service of my country."

"It cannot be disguised, that in the service now proposed to you, even honour, in the general acceptation of that term among men, must also be sacrificed; but not so in the eye of that Being who reads the secret thoughts of the heart, and judges the motive instead of the act. He will approve, though man may condemn."

"It is indeed a hazardous part you would

would have me play. I must become a SPY."

"In appearance only. Our bleeding country requires such service at this momentous crisis. We must fight our secret foes with their own weapons ; and he who will magnanimously step forward as a volunteer in that service, will merit a rich reward, and receive it, too, from Heaven, if not from man. If he falls, he falls a martyr in the glorious cause of liberty."

"I will be that man," replied Crosby, with firmness. "I have counted the cost, and am aware of the danger. I know that I must be content to endure reproach, obloquy, and detestation ; to cover my poor doating parents with shame and misery, and incur the hatred of those I dearest love ; perhaps to suffer an ignominious death, and leave a name of infamy behind. I know it all, and yet I will not shrink from the task.

I will

I will encounter all—risk all—suffer all, if I can thereby serve my country. But there is one condition—If I do fall in the discharge of this duty, you must pledge yourselves to do justice to my memory. It would be dreadful to die, and leave such a name behind me."

"Of that rest assured," replied the chairman, not a little affected by the solemn earnestness of this appeal; "but we hope and trust, that the melancholy duty will not be soon required at our hands. We will furnish you with a pass for your protection; but it must never be exhibited, save in the last extremity. Should you be arrested as an emissary of the enemy, you shall be secretly furnished with the means of escape. But the secret of your real character must go no farther. Your dearest friend must not be intrusted with it."

After

After furnishing their new agent with every necessary instruction, together with the promised *pass*, the committee adjourned, and Crosby immediately set about making arrangements for his new undertaking. His musket was laid aside; and instead of a knapsack, he furnished himself with a large *pedlar's pack**, containing a complete set of shoemaker's tools. Thus equipped, he sallied forth in quest of adventures. His ostensible object (in order to avoid suspicion) was searching for employment, or what the sons of St. Crispin, at that period, termed "whipping the cat;" but, in more modern times, we believe it is called "cutting a stick." Whatever be the genuine classical appellation, however, we must leave our itinerant to pursue his peregrinations in the interior of

* Harvey Birch had been a pedlar from his youth; at least, so he frequently asserted.—*Spy, Vol. i.*

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**of Westchester county, while we take
a peep at the army below.**

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

THE SPY AND THE HAYSTACK.

“ Our foes shall fall, with heedless feet,
Into the pit they made ;
And *tories* perish in the net
Which their own hands have spread.”

IMMEDIATELY after the battle of Long Island, the retreat of the Americans, and the barbarous execution of the brave and unfortunate Hale *, the enemy made prompt dispositions for attacking the city of New-York. It was a serious

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question

See Appendix, No. VI.

question with Washington, whether that place was defensible against so formidable a force; it was finally decided, however, in a council of war, that it had become not only prudent, but necessary, to withdraw the army.

Several of the enemy's ships of war having passed up the Hudson, on the west side of York Island, and also up the East River, on the opposite side, sir Henry Clinton embarked at Long Island, at the head of four thousand men; and proceeding through New-town Bay, crossed the East River, and landed (under cover of five ships of war) at Kipp's Bay, about three miles above the city. Works of considerable strength had been thrown up at this place, to oppose the landing of the enemy; but they were immediately abandoned by the troops stationed in them. Terrified at the fire of the ships, they fled precipitately

pitately towards their main body, and communicated their panic to a detachment which was marching to their support.

Washington, to his extreme mortification, met this whole party retreating in the utmost disorder, and exerted himself to rally them ; but, on the appearance of a small corps of the enemy, they again broke, and fled in confusion ! The general, who was not only mortified and distressed, but actually enraged at their cowardice, drew his sword, and snapped his pistols to check them ; but they continued their flight, without firing a gun !

For a moment, the feelings of Washington got the mastery of his reason.— “ Are these the men with which I am to defend America ? ” exclaimed he, in a tone of bitterness, as he gazed after

the recreant fugitives; then, turning his horse's head to face the advancing enemy, he remained for some minutes exposed to their fire, as if wishing, by an honourable death, to escape the infamy he dreaded from the dastardly conduct of troops on whom he could place no dependence. His aids, and the confidential friends around his person, by indirect violence compelled him to retire.

Nothing now remained but to withdraw the few remaining troops from New-York, and to secure the posts on the heights. The retreat was effected with very inconsiderable loss of men; but all the heavy artillery, and a large portion of the baggage, provisions, and military stores, were unavoidably abandoned.

Major-general Putnam, at the head
of

of three thousand five hundred continental troops, was in the rear of the retreating army. In order to avoid any of the enemy that might be advancing in the direct road to the city, he made choice of a route parallel with, and contiguous to, the North River, till he could arrive at a certain angle, whence another road would conduct him in such a direction as that he might form a junction with the main army. It so happened, that a body of about eight thousand British and Hessians were, at the same moment, advancing on the road, which would have brought him in immediate contact with Putnam, before he could have reached the turn into the other road.

Most fortunately, the British generals, seeing no prospect of engaging the Americans, halted their own troops, and repaired to the house of a Mr. Robert

Murray, a quaker, and a whig. Mrs Murray treated them so hospitably with cake and wine, that they were induced to tarry two hours or more, during which time Tryon was frequently joking her about her American friends.

By this happy incident, Putnam escaped a rencontre with a greatly superior force, which must have proved fatal to his whole party, as one half hour would have been sufficient for the enemy to have secured the road at the turn, and entirely cut off Putnam's retreat. Doctor Thacher, in relating this circumstance, adds—"It has since become almost a common saying among our officers, that Mrs. Murray saved this part of the American army."

The enemy immediately took possession of the city, for the defence of which he left a suitable detachment, and then advanced

advanced towards Harlaem, in pursuit of Washington. The Americans now occupied Kingsbridge, at the north-western extremity of York Island, both sides of which had been carefully fortified: they were also in considerable force at M'Gowan's Pass, and Morris's Heights. A strong detachment was also posted in an intrenched camp, on the heights of Harlaem, within about a mile and a half of the enemy.

On the day after the retreat from New-York, a considerable body of the enemy appearing in the plain between the two camps, Washington ordered colonel Knowlton, with a corps of rangers, under captain Townsend, and major Leitch, with three companies of Virginians, to get in their rear, while he amused them by making apparent dispositions to attack them in front. The plan succeeded. A skirmish ensued, in

which the Americans charged the enemy with great intrepidity, and gained considerable advantage.

Knowlton was killed, and Leitch badly wounded; but their men behaved with great bravery, and fairly beat their adversaries from the field. Most of these were the same men who had disgraced themselves the day before, by running away from an inferior force. Struck with a sense of shame for their late misbehaviour, they had offered themselves as volunteers, and requested the commander-in-chief to give them an opportunity to retrieve their honour.

In the mean time, Crosby was earnestly pursuing his new vocation, travelling about the country, and, with his characteristic acuteness*, becoming "all things

* Harvey Birch possessed the common manners

things to all men," in order to elicit such information as would enable the committee of safety to discriminate between their real friends and their secret foes. Through his intimacy with the latter (who, of course, hailed him as a kindred spirit), he obtained regular information of the movements of the enemy below, and privately transmitted the same to his employers.

As may readily be supposed, the committee, at this time, were trembling for the safety of the American army ; and their well-grounded apprehensions were hourly increasing, when a secret communication from their new agent informed them, that the contest on the

of the country, and was in no way distinguished from men of his class, but by his acuteness, and the mystery which enveloped his movements.—*Spy, Vol. i.*

heights of Harlaem had fully retrieved the tarnished honour of the American arms ; that their good conduct, at this second engagement, had proved an antidote to the poison of their example on the preceding day, and demonstrated that Americans only wanted resolution and good officers to be on an equal footing with their enemies. The committee were thus inspired with hopes that a little more experience would enable their countrymen to assume, not only the name and garb, but the spirit and firmness of soldiers.

In one of Crosby's reconnoitring excursions, the approach of evening, and some fatigue of body, reminded him that it was time to look out for comfortable quarters for the night. There was no public house of entertainment within several miles, and only a few poor farm-houses, thinly scattered, within the whole

whole circumference of his vision. To one of these, therefore, he determined to apply for supper and lodgings. He accordingly struck off into a footpath which led to the nearest; and, bending beneath the weight of his pack, advanced to the door, and knocked for admittance.

A rosy-cheeked girl, of about fifteen, just budding into maturity, of rustic appearance, and bashful demeanour, at length appeared, with visible reluctance, to answer to his summons. On being made acquainted with his wishes, the timid maiden hesitated, stammered, and then suddenly retreated, saying, as she closed the door—"I will ask mother, sir."

In a few minutes, however, she again made her appearance, and bade him walk in. He did not wait for a second invitation,

tation, but followed his fair conductor into an apartment, that served at once the twofold purpose of parlour and kitchen. Here he repeated his request to a middle-aged female, who sat in a corner of the capacious fireplace, very busily employed with her knitting-work.

“ Lodging, did you say?” exclaimed the good woman, surveying her weary guest over the top of her spectacles. “ We don’t keep lodgings, sir.”

“ I am very much fatigued, madam, and would be very grateful for permission to stay in your house till morning.”

“ Oh, well, I don’t know,” returned the old woman, rising from her seat, and approaching the stranger to examine him more particularly. “ Ther’s some strange works now-a-days, and I don’t like to keep any body, for fear of something. What, in mercy’s name, is that great bag there?”

“ That,

" That, madam, is my shop. I am a shoemaker by trade, and am in search of work, with my shop upon my back : will you give me leave to dismount it ?"

" Well, I don't care if you stay long enough to make our John a pair of shoes, for he is going over east, to see some men that are going down to the army next week."

" Are they going to *our* army ?" asked Crosby, as he disengaged himself from his ponderous pack *.

" I 'spose you mean the lower army, don't you, sir ?"

" Oh, yes, madam — certainly," answered Crosby, helping himself to a chair: " I mean the royal army, a large detachment of which is now at Throg's Neck.

* At first sight his strength seemed unequal to manage the unwieldy burden of his pack ; yet he threw it on and off with great dexterity, and with as much apparent ease as if it had been feathers."— *Spy, Vol. i.*

Neck. The rebel army has run away from York Island, and is now moving towards White Plains. But Howe will soon overhaul them, and give a good account of them too, or I miss my guess."

"Here, Sally!—where are you? Get this man something to eat, for his good news; and then see if the best bedroom is put to rights, and make him as comfortable as you can."

As a good loyalist, Crosby was now made welcome to the best the house afforded. While he was thus refreshing himself, and chatting with his loquacious landlady, the goodman of the house himself came home, to whom she eagerly introduced her guest, as a warm adherent of his majesty, and a sworn enemy to the rebels. This assertion was abundantly confirmed by the remarks of Crosby himself, during a long and interesting conversation on the subject of
that

that wicked rebellion against the mother country.

In the course of this conversation, Crosby learned that a company was forming about three miles east of that place, for the purpose of joining the British army. On his intimating a desire to become a member of this corps, his host readily agreed to introduce him to the captain, in the course of the following day. He then conducted his guest to the best bed in the house, and wishing him a pleasant night's repose, left him to his own meditations, to dream of plots and counterplots, or any other subject that fancy might conjure up.

Whatever might have been the character of his dreams, however, our adventurer arose the next morning, completely refreshed and invigorated; and, after partaking of a hearty breakfast, he accompanied

accompanied his host to the residence of the tory captain before mentioned. On being introduced, by his attentive guide, as a loyalist, who was desirous of serving his majesty, Crosby was most cordially received, and politely invited to stay to dinner, and to spend the remainder of the day and the coming night at the captain's house.

This invitation was readily accepted ; and in the course of the evening, Crosby was made acquainted with many interesting particulars relative to the plans and intentions of the captain and his confederates.

On the following morning, at breakfast, the subject was again introduced, when Crosby was asked if he was ready to enter his name on the muster-roll.

“ I have not yet entirely made up my mind,”

mind," replied he. "Such a step will necessarily be attended with considerable danger; for in case I should be taken by the Americans, and my name known, they would hang me as a traitor."

"Were there any solid grounds for such an apprehension," replied the other, "you would only incur that risk in common with us all. But the rebels dare not resort to such extremities, for fear of a terrible retaliation."

"It may be so," returned Crosby; "but I think I should rather go down without entering my name on the roll —unless, indeed, I could first examine, and see if there are any names of my acquaintance on it."

"That privilege shall be cheerfully granted you," said the captain, producing a long roll of signatures, and handing the same to his visitor, who ran over them with a satisfaction which he

he took good care to conceal; for he readily perceived, to use his own expression, that there was a "fine haul for his net."

After attentively examining every name, he rolled up the list, with an air of disappointment, saying, as he returned it to the captain—"I shall beg to be excused, sir; they are all strangers to me, and it is not impossible that this roll may one day fall into the hands of the Americans. Besides, I can just as well go down without enrolling my name."

"Well, sir," replied the captain, "I have a safer way yet, for those who are influenced by similar apprehensions with yourself; I put five or six names on one slip of paper, which I then conceal beneath a large stone in my meadow. I have several such deposits. Come along with me, and say what you think of the plan."

So

So saying, he arose from the table, and, accompanied by his guest, sallied out into a large meadow, at some distance from the house. After visiting several spots where these secret muster-rolls were deposited, he directed the attention of his companion to a haystack of enormous dimensions, and asked him what he thought of it.

"I think it would prove a *great* temptation to a rebel foraging party," answered Crosby, after a short silence, and with some covert humour, which cost him an exertion to conceal *.

"It

* "When engaged in his ordinary business, the intelligence of his face appeared lively, active, and flexible, though uncommonly acute. If the conversation turned on the ordinary transactions of life, his air became abstracted and restless; but if, by chance, the revolution and the country were the topic, his whole system seemed altered—all his faculties were concentrated; he would listen, for a great

"It probably would," observed the other, "were such parties abroad; but it would be difficult for the best mathematician among them to determine its solid contents by measuring its surfaces—it is a mystery worth penetrating into; let me instruct you."

With these words, the speaker lifted up the hay, on one side of the huge edifice, and discovered a small opening, which led to the interior of the excavated pile. Fond of adventure, Crosby entered without hesitation, and found himself in a most ingenious hiding-place, of sufficient capacity to contain forty or fifty men, comfortably seated.

"What think you of that?" asked the great length of time, without speaking, and then would break silence by some light and jocular remarks, that were too much at variance with his former manner not to be affectation."—*Spy, vol. i.*

the proprietor of the hay, as his guest emerged from its interior; "would the rebels ever think of looking for you there?"

"I think not," replied the other, with an inward chuckle, as he surveyed the exterior of the premises very attentively; "I should as soon think of searching for a needle in a haymow."

The captain smiled with much self-complacency at this brief approval of his invention, and then renewed his solicitations for Crosby to enroll his name. The latter, however, still hesitated, but promised to give a definitive answer on the following day. With this assurance the other remained satisfied; and the remainder of that day was devoted to making further arrangements for the contemplated expedition.

Night

Night soon returned, and Crosby was still the captain's guest. At the usual hour he retired to his bed, where he lay, listening attentively to every movement in the house, until he felt perfectly assured that the family were safely locked in the arms of sleep. When "every sound was hushed, and all was still," he cautiously arose, dressed himself, and stole out of the house, without giving any alarm. Before midnight he was consulting with his employers at White Plains.

Such arrangements were immediately adopted by the committee of safety, as were considered by all parties appropriate to the emergency. Their informant then took his leave, and before daylight, was again snoring in his bed, at the house of the loyal captain.

On the following morning he informed

ed his entertainer, that he had made up his mind as to the subject of their recent conversation. He was willing and anxious to become a member of the company, and would hold himself in readiness to march with them at a moment's warning; but should decline signing his name to the muster-roll, until they had safely arrived within the British lines. The captain appeared satisfied with this arrangement, and expressed a hope that every thing would be prepared for their departure on the following day.

"Would it not be advisable then," asked Crosby, "to call a general meeting of the company this evening? there is much to do, and it is necessary that we act in concert. When we are all together, our plans can be better digested, as we shall have the opinion and advice of each individual. Such a meeting is indispensable before we go down,
and

and there is certainly no time to be lost."

"The idea is a good one," replied the captain; "and every man shall be notified to meet here this evening, when we will complete our arrangements, and be off to-morrow. You must assist me in calling them together."

Crosby readily consented to exert himself on this occasion; and went about the business with such cheerful alacrity, that before nine o'clock in the evening, the whole company were assembled in the captain's parlour, with the exception of the lieutenant, who had gone from home on some temporary business.

By ten o'clock the business of the meeting was nearly all completed; and the usual refreshments were about being introduced, when the attention of the party

party was suddenly arrested by the loud trampling of horses.

The lights were instantly extinguished ; and they all sat in breathless silence, every heart palpitating with fearful anticipations of some unpleasant adventure, until they were aroused to action, by a voice at the door exclaiming — “ Surrender ! or you are all dead men ! ”

At that instant the door was thrown from its hinges, and the apartment was filled with the American rangers, all heavily armed.

“ Surrender ! I demand it in the name of the continental congress ! ” exclaimed the leader of these unwelcome intruders. “ Resistance is useless, and escape impossible, for the house is surrounded ; you are our prisoners.”

Words are inadequate to depict the general consternation produced by this alarming salutation. Some flew to the attic; others retreated as precipitately to the cellar; and all most devoutly wished themselves in the bowels of the haystack, as there was nothing to hope from the bowels of their captors. Several attempted to throw themselves from the windows, but were soon convinced that there was no chance for escape in that direction. The secret, but unsuspected cause of all this confusion and dismay, made a feint of concealing himself in a closet, but was quickly dragged forth, and compelled to share the fate of his companions, who were manacled in pairs, and marched like felons to the village of White Plains.

CHAP. VII.

THE ESCAPE.

To be the mark
 Of smoky muskets ! Oh, you leaden messengers,
 That ride upon the violent speed of fire,
 Fly with false aim !

SHAKESPEARE.

HE historic events connected with the name of White Plains, will long live in the pages of American history; and if the reader have patience to accompany us through a few more chapters, he will acknowledge that there is sufficient cause for this lasting celebrity. At present, we merely wish to introduce him

to the scene of so many important transactions.

Bronx river, a beautiful stream of water that rises just on the south line of Newcastle, in the county of Westchester, holds its course nearly due south to the village of West Farms, from whence it empties into the East River, between Morrisania and Throg's Neck. A few miles east of this stream, and nearly parallel with it, is another, called Mamaroneck Creek, which empties into Long Island Sound, near a village of the same name.

Between these two little rivers, and near the head of the latter, is the township of White Plains, comprised in an area of about eight and a half square miles, with Northcastle on the north, Harrison on the east, Scarsdale on the south, and Greensburgh on the west.

On

In a fine plain, near the centre of the town, stands the flourishing little village, of the same name, which has been the theatre of so many revolutionary incidents. The reader will recollect, that we left our prisoners on the march to his place, under a strong escort of Townsend's rangers.

On arriving at the village, where the committee of safety were still in session, awaiting the result of the enterprise, each of the prisoners underwent a martial examination, which resulted in their being ordered to Fishkill, there to wait a more formal investigation. Our hero was privately reminded, that he must still continue to support the character he had assumed, until his arrival at their place of destination, when some means should be provided by which he might effect his escape, without awakening any suspicions as to his real character.

On the following morning, the whole party resumed their journey, in the same order as before. After a march of about twenty-five miles, they arrived at Peekskill, a small village on the eastern bank of the Hudson, where they took boats, and crossed the river to Fort Montgomery*. Here the prisoners were permitted to remain a short time, for rest and refreshment: and here our hero encountered the most distressing incident that he had ever yet experienced.

On entering the fortress, the first person he recognised was his former tutor, the worthy gentleman of whom a brief notice was taken at the conclusion of

our

* This fort was tolerably situated on the western bank of the Hudson, to annoy shipping going up the river; the works were pretty good on that side, but were not so, nor fully completed on the back side.—*Heath's Memoirs*, p. 129.

our first chapter. The recognition was mutual; but the circumstances under which the meeting took place, rendered it peculiarly painful to both parties.

The worthy preceptor started with terror and astonishment, on beholding his favourite pupil, the son of his dearest friend, manacled like a felon, and dragged to prison, with a gang of unprincipled wretches, under the ignominious charge of treason to their country. He gazed for a moment, as if unwilling to believe his senses; then advancing to the prisoner, and seizing him by the hand, he exclaimed, with an emotion that it was impossible to conceal—“Enoch Crosby!—it cannot be possible! Explain this horrid mystery! How is it that I see *you* in this situation?”

Crosby instinctively returned the friendly pressure of his tutor's hand; then casting his eyes on the ground,

meekly replied—" You see me as I am. I have no explanation to offer."

" Good God ! is it then true that you have turned traitor to your country, and are now a prisoner to her brave defenders ? It cannot be ! There must be some dreadful mistake. Speak, and relieve me from this fearful suspense.—Have *you* been concerned in the secret plots for which these men are now in custody ?"

" Were it not so," replied Crosby, with a slight tremor in his voice, " we should both have been spared the pain of this interview."

" Oh, who shall tell your poor old father this !" exclaimed the other, dropping his pupil's hand, and clasping both his own together in agony, while the big tears coursed each other down his furrowed cheeks. " What will be the feelings of your doating parents, when they learn that the son, to whom they looked as
the

the pride and prop of their declining age, has proved unworthy of the care and affection which have been so freely lavished upon him?—that he has forgotten the precepts of his father—the lessons of his teacher—and is a convicted traitor to his country? The news will break their hearts."

For the first time, Crosby now felt the full weight of the cross to which he had voluntarily lent his shoulder. He felt—and it almost crushed him. But it was too late to recede; he had put his hand to the plough, and dared not look back. With a groan of anguish, he lifted up his manly form beneath the load. The effort was desperate, but it was successful.—“Spare me,” he faintly articulated, as he brushed a truant tear from his eye, and turned to accompany his fellow-captives to their quarters. “There is *one* who knows—who judges—who approves; He will comfort my parents. Farewell!”

So saying, he departed with the re
leaving his good old tutor to lament
apostacy as unexpected and inexplicable
as it was mortifying and distressing.
The old gentleman immediately dis
patched a letter to the elder Crosby,
which he communicated the afflictive
intelligence, with as much caution, deli
cacy, and gentleness, as possible.
It was a blow for which the parents were
not prepared; but it is not our province
to portray their feelings on the occa
sion. We must accompany the son.

From Fort Montgomery, the pris
ers were again embarked, and proce
ssed up the river, through the lofty and su
lime scenery of the Highlands, and be
tween those Herculean pillars of the
western world, which are supposed to
have been once united in an adamantine
barrier across the present course of the
majestic Hudson. Leaving West
Point

Saint and Butter-Hill on the left, and the Collossean break-neck*, St. Anthony, the right, a beautiful champaign country opened at once upon their view. Are the pleasant villages of New Windsor, Newburgh, and Fishkill, with the charming landscapes beyond them, presented a charming contrast to the rude misery which our voyagers had just left behind them.

On reaching the mouth of Fishkill Creek, on the east side of the Hudson, nearly opposite Newburgh, the prisoners were landed; and from thence proceeded on foot, under their former escort, along the delightful valley, thickly studded with trees, through which that stream pursues its sinuous course to the river. A march of five miles brought them to the beautiful

H 6 little

* See fourth note in Chap. IX.

little village which was to terminate their journey.

Here the captive loyalists were committed to prison, or rather conducted to church, for such was the edifice which the peculiar circumstances of the times had converted into a stronghold, for the safe keeping of prisoners of war. It was a low antiquated building, in the Dutch style of architecture, with enormous thick walls of rough stone, pierced with two rows of arched windows. The main building was an oblong square, with a square tower attached to the eastern extremity, from the top of which arose a modest Gothic steeple, surmounted by a ball and weathercock. The principal entrance was in the centre of the south side, fronting the road which led from the village to the river.

Instead of the sepulchral yew, with
which

which romance has invariably embellished such consecrated ground, a number of luxuriant willows here cast a melancholy shade among the rustic memorials of departed worth. Here it was that little groupes of villagers were wont to assemble on a Sabbath morning; and, while they awaited the appearance of their pious clergyman, reverently discuss the local news and politics of the day.

But, alas! even the hallowed rites of the sanctuary must sometimes give place to the blighting footsteps of ruthless war! That roof which had so often resounded with the language of "peace, and good will to man," was now re-echoing with the curses of disappointed malevolence. The stone church had become a prison, as its more humble neighbour (a wooden church without a steeple), had, for similar reasons, been converted

converted into an hospital for the sick and wounded. If this be sacrilege, of what was that British general guilty, who prostituted an elegant church in Boston to the purposes of a stable ! But this is digression. Our present business is at Fishkill.

This pleasant little village (situated in a township of the same name) is in the county of Dutchess, north of the Highlands, and about five miles east from the Hudson. It consists of a handsome collection of neat white farmhouses, with here and there a mansion of more ample dimensions and showy exterior. These buildings are principally erected on a semicircular street, a little north of a corresponding bend in the stream before mentioned; and in the midst of them, on a little plain, are the two churches, rising with modest dignity above the elevation of the humbler mansions around them.

The

The first appearance of this village, in approaching it from the south, is picturesque in the extreme. After toiling, for fifteen miles, among the rugged hills and shapeless rocks, between which the road winds its serpentine course—when there appears no prospect of a speedy termination to the traveller's fatigue—and when his impatience begins to despair of relief, at that moment the village and plains of Fishkill suddenly open upon his view, with the effect of enchantment, affording an ample compensation for all his previous anxiety and perplexity.

Although this is the oldest village in the county of Dutchess, it was but thinly populated at the time of which we are writing. The marquis de Chateleur, who visited it four years afterwards, when it had become the principal depot of the American army, says—"There
are

are not more than fifty houses in the space of two miles." He adds, however, that the American magazines, hospitals, workshops, &c. "form a little town of themselves, composed of handsome large barracks, built in the wood at the foot of the mountains." It is well known, that Fishkill possessed all the qualities necessary for a place of military depot, at this critical period, being situated on the high road from Connecticut, near the river, and West Point—that "Gibraltar of America"—and protected, at the same time, by a chain of inaccessible mountains, which occupy a space of more than twenty miles between the Croton River and that of Fishkill.

But whatever local advantages, or rural charms, this village might have boasted in the year 1776, they were all lost on the wretched inmates of the stone church. The committee of safety had

had arrived from White Plains, and were now in session, at a farmhouse within a few rods of their prison. Thither were the newly-arrived captives conducted, one by one, to undergo a second private examination. The muster-roll, and other papers, found on the person of their leader, were considered as a sufficient testimony of their traitorous intentions; they were therefore remanded to prison, to await a more formal investigation before a competent tribunal.

Crosby, in his turn, was also placed at the bar of this military inquisition. On entering the apartment where his employers were seated, in all that magisterial dignity which surrounds, or is supposed to surround, the stern arbiters of life and death, he affected such extreme reluctance to advance, as rendered it necessary for the officer in attendance
to

to compel him to proceed. With clanking chains, and an aspect of vacant despair, he at length approached the awful bar, and tremblingly awaited the pleasure of his judges. A lurking smile was visible in each of their visages ; but the prisoner appeared to be too much agitated with terror to observe it.

As soon as the officer had resumed his station on the outside of the door, however, and Crosby was left alone with the committee, the characters were changed ; for they at once lost the gravity of judges, and laughed outright, at a scene which so nearly approached the ludicrous. When their merriment had a little subsided, they highly commended Crosby for the effective manner in which he had performed his part, and the important service he had thereby rendered to his country. They then consulted with him on the best mode of making

making his escape; and requested him, when that was effected, to repair, with all possible diligence, to Wappinger's Creek, and call upon Mr. *****, who would furnish him with further instructions, as "*there was business for him on the other side the Hudson.*"

Crosby signified his readiness to continue in this hazardous and disreputable service; but suggested the propriety of his assuming a different name, in order to prosecute it with greater effect. The committee approved the idea; and it was finally understood between them, that all communications from their secret agent would in future bear the signature of "**JOHN SMITH.**"

As soon as these preliminaries were all duly adjusted, the committee resumed their former stern deportment, and Crosby his fictitious character. The officer

officer re-entered, and, in obedience to orders, led his trembling prisoner back to the church.

On the approach of night, a competent number of soldiers were detailed for the prison guard, some of whom were stationed in the basement of the tower, to guard the eastern entrance of the building. On the outside, four armed sentinels were posted in as many different positions, corresponding to the four cardinal points of the compass. The remainder of the little force then in the village were in barracks, at a short distance from the church.

In entering and leaving his prison, Crosby had hastily reconnoitred the premises without: and after his attendance on the committee, he lost no time in making his observations within. He soon ascertained that there was only one

one avenue through which an escape could be attempted with the least probability of success, and that was a window at the extreme northwest corner, which was partially obscured by the thick foliage of a large willow that grew near it. Screened from observation by the friendly gloom of this tree, he thought it practicable to pass the sentinel, and clear the churchyard in safety. Or, should he not be able to elude the vigilance of the guard, still the uncertainty of his aim in that shadowy position, would leave little to apprehend from the discharge of his musket. At all events, he determined to make the experiment.

Harassed in mind, and fatigued in body, the prisoners soon availed themselves of such indifferent accommodations as their situation afforded; and before the "noon of night," there were few,

few, besides Crosby, who were not fast locked in the arms of sweet forgetfulness. But, as Hamlet says,

“ Some must watch, while others sleep,
So runs this world away.”

When every sound was hushed, save the discordant nasal chorus of the unconscious performers around him, Crosby arose from his counterfeit slumber, and cautiously approached the window, from which he had previously succeeded in removing the fastenings. Without noise, he raised the sash;

“ And, that they might not clank, held fast his chains.”

In the next moment he was safely seated on the soft mould of a newly-covered grave, busily employed in divesting his limbs of their iron bracelets. When this was accomplished, he cautiously raised himself upon his feet; and known
ing

ing that a thick swamp lay within one hundred rods, north west of the church, started in that direction, with as much speed as the uneven surface of a burying-ground would permit.

He had not proceeded fifty paces, however, before he was suddenly challenged by a sentinel on his right. Hesitation would have been fatal. The swamp was before him—the path had become plainer—he darted forward with the celerity of a deer. The whizzing of bullet, and the report of a musket, saluted his ear at the same moment; but he considered the salutation merely as a friendly warning not to relax his speed. The race was for life or death; for the alarm was given, and "the chase was up." Three or four more leaden messengers*, each

* Fifty pistols lighted the scene instantly, and the bullets whistled in every direction around the head of the devoted pedlar.—*Spy, Vol. i.*

each as harmless as the first, passed him in quick succession; and, as if emulating their velocity, he pursued them with accelerated swiftness. The pursuers were behind—but the friendly swamp was in front, extending its bushy arms to receive him. One more effort
—He is safe!

CHAP. VIII.

THE MOUNTAIN CAVE.

Honour and policy, like unsevered friends,
I' the war do grow together.

SHAKESPEARE.

WHILE the foregoing events were transpiring in the vicinity of the Highlands, transactions of higher importance, and on a much larger scale, were going forward forty miles below. It was an important object with Washington, to seize the roads and passes that communicated with the eastern states; to prevent which Howe had left New-York, and the greater part of the royal army,

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by

by the way of Hurlgate, and landed, as before mentioned, at Throg's Neck, in Westchester county. It was evidently the determination of the British general, either to force the Americans from their position on York Island, or to enclose them in it.

Aware of his design, Washington removed a part of his troops from York Island, to join those at Kingsbridge; and, at the same time, detached some regiments to Westchester. It still appeared to be his intention, however, to retain that part of the island which he now occupied; and there was certainly a prevailing disposition among the officers generally to do the same. But the gallant Lee, who had just returned from a successful expedition at the south*, gave

* Some time previous to the evacuation of Boston, sir Henry Clinton had been sent southward, to

gave such convincing reasons for evacuating the island altogether, that it was immediately resolved to withdraw the bulk of the army.

He also urged the expediency of eva-
I 2 cuating

to the assistance of governor Martin and lord William Campbell, governors of the two Carolinas. As soon as this was known in Cambridge, Lee was ordered to set forward and observe his movements, and prepare to meet him with advantage, in any part of the continent he might think proper to visit. On reaching New-York, with his detachment from Cambridge, Lee put the city in a state of defence, and then proceeded south with such rapidity, that, to the astonishment of Clinton, Lee was in Virginia before him. But as the object of the British armament was still further south, Lee, with uncommon celerity, traversed the continent, met Clinton in North Carolina, and was again ready for the defence of Sullivan's Island, near Charleston, in South Carolina, before the arrival of the British troops, under the command of Clinton. The Americans were triumphant, and the discomfited enemy was glad to retire to the general rendezvous before New-York.

cuating Fort Washington*; but in this he was opposed by Greene, who argued that the possession of that post would divert a large body of the enemy from joining their main force; and in conjunction with Fort Lee, on the opposite side of the river, would be of great use in covering the transportation of provisions and stores, up the Hudson, for the service of the American troops. He added farther, that the garrison could be brought off at any time, by boats from the Jersey side of the river.

Unfortunately for the cause, the opinion of Greene prevailed. Though the system of evacuating and retreating was generally adopted, an exception was made in favour of Fort Washington, and near three thousand men were assigned

* This fort was situated on the bank of the Hudson, in the vicinity of Kingsbridge.

signed for its defence—an unfortunate error, as will appear in the sequel; for, as adjutant-general Read afterwards said, in a letter to Lee—"If a real defence of the lines was intended, the number was too few; if the fort only, the garrison was too numerous by half."

In retreating from York Island, the American leader was careful to make a front towards his enemy, from Eastchester almost to White Plains, in order to secure the march of those who were behind, and to defend the removal of the sick, the cannon, and the stores of the army. In this manner the Americans formed a line of small, detached, intrenched camps, on the several heights and strong grounds, from Valentine's Hill, near Kingsbridge, on the right, to the vicinity of the White Plains, on the left; the whole, of course, fronting eastward.

In the mean time, the enemy was not idle; although he had apparently been so for several days after his landing at Throg's Neck, which is a kind of mole or point, connected with the main by a long causeway, through a marshy tract of considerable extent. His spies however had been on the alert; and the first movement of Washington was the signal for Howe to commence his favourite scheme of circumvention.

Flushed with his recent victory on Long Island, the British general ardently longed to grapple once more with his discomfited opponent; but Washington wisely considered that the prize at stake was of too much value to be risked on the fortuitous result of a single contest, under his present disadvantages of numbers and discipline; he therefore cautiously avoided a general engagement, while his troops were daily acquiring confidence and

and experience by skirmishing with their enemies.

After several unsuccessful attempts to pass the causeway before mentioned, which was strongly guarded by the Americans, the British crossed to the other side of Throg's Neck, embarked on board their boats, crossed over the cove, and relanded on a place called Pell's Neck. From thence they commenced a brisk movement towards New-Rochelle*. Three or four American regiments were immediately sent forward to annoy them on their march. These took a good position behind a stone fence; and when the advance of the enemy had approached sufficiently near, poured such a well-directed fire upon

* New-Rochelle is about five miles south of White Plains, and is washed on one side by the waters of the East River, or Long Island Sound.

his columns, as caused many of his finest troops to bite the dust. This unexpected assault not only checked, but even caused the advancing party to fall back; but being immediately supported, they returned vigorously to the charge. For a short time the action was sharp, and well supported; but the Americans were finally obliged to give way to superior force, and the enemy pursued his march almost to New-Rochelle, where he halted.

Shortly after this affair, Howe removed the right and centre of his army two miles farther north, on the road to White Plains. During this movement, a skirmish took place between two hundred of Lee's men, and three hundred Hessians, in which the latter suffered considerably. The British then moved on, in two columns, and took a position with the Bronx River in front *; upon which

* See Chapter VII. second paragraph.

which Washington assembled his main force at White Plains, behind entrenchments.

Thus, like two skilful chess-players, did these able generals manœuvre their men; while the theatre of their movements, like an immense chess-board, was crossed with lines, and chequered with redoubts and entrenchments. But an important crisis in the game was now evidently at hand; one more move must, apparently, decide it. Heaven grant that it may be "checkmate to the king!"

But while these two gallant opponents are thus sternly looking defiance at each other, both eagerly watching for an opening to strike, it is our duty to return to the fugitive whom we left in the swamp, near the village of Fishkill.

Crosby remained secure in his place of concealment, until every sound of alarm and pursuit had ceased; he then proceeded, with no little difficulty, to grope his way through bushes and brambles, quagmires, and morasses. He doubtless reasoned with himself, on this occasion, as Aesop's fox is said to have done, under similar circumstances.—“For the sake of the good, let me bear the evil with patience; each bitter has its sweet; and these brambles, though they wound my flesh, preserve my life from danger.”

After much exertion and fatigue, he succeeded in emerging from the thicket; and, fortunately, on the side opposite to where he entered. He then pursued his course northward, with the speed of one who is sensible that every step removes him farther from danger.

In less than two hours he found his course impeded by a stream, which he rightly conjectured to be Wappinger's Creek, the boundary line between Fishkill and Poughkeepsie *.

Agreeably to the instructions he had received from the committee, he now turned to the left, and a short half-hour brought him to the residence of Mr.

To be suddenly roused from bed, by some hasty messenger, at any hour of the night, had become so common an occurrence, since the commencement of hostilities, that this gentleman evinced no symptoms of surprise or alarm, when he appeared at the door, in his night-

* This name is said to have been derived from the Indian word *Apokeepsing*, signifying "safe harbour."

gown and slippers, to answer to the knock of his untimely visitor. A few brief sentences, exchanged in a low voice, convinced both that they were treading on safe ground. Crosby was therefore requested to enter, and be seated, while the other retired, to resume such habiliments as were better adapted to the purposes of business.

On the return of his host, Crosby was informed, that his coming had been anxiously waited for, as the committee had intimated that he might be expected before midnight. Refreshments were then introduced; and while the weary traveller was diligently employed in appeasing the cravings of a voracious appetite, his entertainer proceeded to "open the business of the meeting."

It appeared, that Mr. ***** had received

ceived certain information, that an English officer was privately enrolling a company, on the other side of the river. This fact he had communicated to the committee of safety, on their arrival at Fishkill ; and they had agreed to send him an agent, with whom he might concert some feasible plan for seizing the officer, and making prisoners of his men.

This being a business in which Crosby, to use his own expression, felt himself " perfectly at home," he readily entered into the scheme, and undertook to see it accomplished by his own ingenuity and address.

This proposition was gladly acceded to by his host, who gave him such instructions as would tend to facilitate the project ; and before daylight, our hero was safely landed on the western bank
of

of the Hudson, in the town of Marlborough, a little north of Newburgh.

Agreeably to the directions he had received, Crosby immediately struck into the country, in a southwestern course from the river; and after proceeding about twelve miles, applied at a farmhouse for refreshment. Here a comfortable breakfast was cheerfully prepared for him; and, while partaking of it, he received such topographical information, as convinced him that he had reached the right spot to commence operations.

After finishing his repast, therefore, he began to make himself known as an itinerant shoemaker, in pursuit of work, and intimated a wish of being employed to make shoes for the farmer or his family.

“ I wish

"I wish to do something to pay my way," added Crosby, with an honest simplicity, which he well knew how to assume, "as I don't like to be beholden to any one for a meal's victuals, or a night's lodging."

"That's all very right," returned the farmer; "every honest man would wish to live by his own airnens."

"Well, don't you think that you could give me something to do for a few days? If you are not in want of shoes, I wouldn't care to turn my hand to anything."

"Why, yes," replied the other, after a little reflection, "I rather guess that I should like to have you work for me a day or two. It is true, I have no shoe-making to do at present; but if you can help me on the farm, in killing hogs, and sich like, I should like to have you, and my wife shall assist you."

Crosby

Crosby readily consented; and as there was no cavil on the score of wages, the bargain was soon struck. He accordingly went to work, with that characteristic diligence and assiduity which was always certain to win the approbation of his employers.

But though his whole time and attention appeared to be devoted to the duties of his new vocation, his grand object was never lost sight of. At every fitting opportunity, he strove, by sundry indirect, and apparently indifferent inquiries, to elicit some information from the family, that might assist in the prosecution of his ulterior designs. For two days he was unsuccessful; but on the third, he was indebted to accident for what his ingenuity had been vainly exerted to obtain.

It was a mild morning, near the close
of

of October, that Crosby and his employer were making some arrangements for the business of the day, when their attention was arrested by a sound that resembled distant thunder. It came from the south-east, from whence a light air was breathing, but neither cloud nor rack appeared in that quarter.

"Can that be thunder?" asked Crosby.

"I should rather guess not," replied the other: "we seldom have it so late in the fall. It is more likely the two parties are skirmishing below."

"They must be skirmishing to some purpose," observed Crosby. "That is the language of artillery, and not of the smallest caliber. And yet," continued he, in a soliloquizing tone, "they cannot be above the Plains." Then, turning to his companion, he inquired if

if he thought the report of cannon could be heard so far.

"Why, yes, I should say so," replied the other. "From here to White Plains is only about forty miles, in a straight line; and in the last French war, when general Abercrombie was beat at Ticonderoga, the cannon was heard at Saratogue, which is over fifty miles, as plain as we hear these."

The sounds still continued, without much intermission, while both remained silent, and listened with interest. At length Crosby ventured to observe— "They must have warm work below. Both parties must lose blood, which ever gains the day."

"Ah! these are awful times!" sighed the other. "There's no telling how it will end."

"What do you think of all this business?" asked Crosby, in a tone that did not indicate much interest in the question.

"Why,

"Why, really I don't know what to think," replied the other, evasively. "Sometimes I think it is a very doubtful case with us; and then, again, I almost think, if I had a good chance, and no family to support, that I would just go down to the lower party. But, you know, it won't do for me to say so."

"Perhaps you could not get down there safe, if you felt ever so much disposed to go," said Crosby, in a tone that might be considered interrogatory or not, as the auditor pleased.

"Oh, yes, I could," returned the other, with a significant leer, that intimated the speaker knew more than he was at liberty to communicate.

Like a keen pointer, Crosby had now scented the game, and was determined to persevere in the pursuit; he therefore promptly answered—"Well, I wish that *I* could; for I believe that *I* might do better *there* than by staying here."

The

The other turned on him a look of cautious scrutiny; but reading nothing in his countenance to excite suspicion, he ventured to observe—"I can tell you, if you promise not to expose me, how you can get there if you wish."

"Of course, I will not expose you; for how *can* I, without exposing myself? I will be much obliged to you if you will assist me in going down, so that I may not be detected by the rebels."

"Well, then I *will* tell you," returned the other, with renewed confidence; at the same time looking cautiously around, in every direction, to ascertain that no listeners were near.—"Do you see yonder mountain? On the west side of it is a curious little cave, that's been dug o' purpose; but you might pass it a hundred times without knowing there was sich a thing there. In that cave, an English captain keeps him-self

self concealed ; and we, who are in the secret, supply him with every thing that heart can wish. He is recruiting among the Highlands, and has nearly got his company filled."

" I will offer myself immediately," exclaimed Crosby, with a sudden animation, that might have excited suspicions in the mind of a keener observer than his companion ; who, without noticing it, immediately replied—" Well, I will tell you just where you can go to find him ; or wait till after dark, and I will go with you."

" That will be the very thing," returned our hero, inwardly chuckling at the success of his manœuvre ; " by joining his company, I can go down in safety."

" No doubt of it ; but we must be very cautious. In these times, every one is watching his next neighbour."

" You may depend upon my prudence,"

dence," returned Crosby ; " I have no inclination to get into the hands of the rebels again ; it was at the hazard of my life that I escaped from them at Fishkill."

" What ! have you really been taken by them ? Why, how in nature did you get away ?"

Crosby here recapitulated the particulars of his escape from the stone church, and then added—" They are obstinate dogs, for you hear, they are at it yet."

" Let the riglars get them at close quarters, with the baggonet, and the rebels will stand no chance," replied the other. " They must be at long shot now, or the skrimmage would not last so long."

Here the conversation ended ; and separating to pursue their respective avocations, they met no more till supper-time ;

time ; after which, they set out, according to agreement, to seek an interview with the military hermit, in the "cave of the mountain."

On arriving at the western side of the lofty eminence which our hero's conductor had pointed out to him in the morning, they paused near a clump of dwarf cedars which grew at its base. In front of them was a dark-looking object, which proved to be a huge rock, cleft in twain by some concussion of the elements, or by a precipitate descent from the dizzy steep above it. With a heavy stick, which the farmer carried with him, he struck several blows, in quick succession, on the flat surface of the rock ; and in a short time, a bright ray of light darted from behind it, and gradually increased in brilliancy. In the next moment, the object of their visit stood before them, with a small lantern in

in his hand, by the aid of which, he took a critical survey of his visitors without speaking. He then bid the farmer welcome, who promptly introduced his companion as "John Smith, a faithful friend to his majesty," and instantly disappeared.

The captain received Crosby very cordially; and after numerous inquiries, to all of which he received plausible and satisfactory answers, he at length exclaimed—"Well, sir, you appear to have limb and muscle, and would make a devilish good-looking soldier. I should like to have you in my corps of Highlanders, which have just been collected. Come, what say you?"

"I have not the least objection," replied Crosby; "and as I have no fixed home, or place to go to, I should like to stay with you; for if the rebels catch me again, they will show me no mercy."

"Agreed!"

"Agreed!" exclaimed the captain, after eyeing him sharply for a few moments; "you are a d——d honest-looking fellow, and I'll try you. Come, sir, see if you can double up that gigantic carcass of yours, so as to get into that hole," pointing to the mouth of an artificial excavation in the mountain, just behind the cloven rock, which Crosby had not before observed.

The new recruit instantly obeyed the orders of his superior, and found himself in a small, comfortable, well-furnished apartment, with seats, and other conveniences, suitable for two or three persons. In the centre of the floor stood a small round table, liberally supplied with a great variety of cold meats, pastry, bread, butter, cheese, and every other kind of eatables that the neighbouring farm-houses could furnish. But what the occupant of the cave most ear-

nestly recommended to the attention of his guest, was a large jug, or rather its contents, which he swore was as fine Madeira as had ever graced the table of sir Harry, or even his lordship himself.

" Come, my good fellow, help yourself," said the hermit, pushing the jug to his new proselyte, after filling his own goblet to the brim. " D—n me, but you shall live like a fighting cock, for the few days longer that I have got to burrow in this hole. A health to his majesty, and success to the good cause."

" With all my heart!" exclaimed Crosby, and drained the goblet.

As our hero now appears to be very comfortably situated, in a strong hold, with plenty of provisions for the garrison, we will venture to leave him there for a few days, while we revisit the scene

ie from whence proceeded those
ounds of war," which gave rise to the
versation that ultimately brought
ut the present change in his circum-
ices.

CHAP. IX.

CHADERTON'S HILL..

— This day hath made
 Much work for tears in many an English mother,
 Whose sons lie scattered on the bleeding ground :
 Many a widow's husband grovelling lies,
 Coldly embracing the discoloured earth.

SHAKESPEARE'S *King John*.

WE left the two hostile armies in front of each other, at White Plains, with souls " in arms, and eager for the fray." On the morning of the twenty-eighth of October, they still retained the same position, sharply watching each other's motions.

In

In the mean time, a commanding eminence, on the south-west of the American camp, had caught the attention of Washington, who, knowing the importance of strengthening his position, resolved to reconnoitre the ground immediately. He accordingly ordered such of his general officers as were not on duty, to attend him, and rode to the spot; but, on examination, found it not so suitable for his purposes as he had anticipated.

"Yonder," said Lee, pointing to another eminence on the north, "is the ground we ought to occupy."

"Let us then go and view it," replied the commander-in-chief; and away they posted, as fast as their mettlesome steeds would carry them.

They had not proceeded far, however, when a light-horseman was seen coming

up, on full gallop, his steed almost out of breath. Hastily saluting the general he exclaimed—"The British are on the camp, sir!"

"Then, gentlemen," said Washington, "we have other business than connoitring—follow me!"

So saying, he put spurs to his prancing charger, and galloped to the camp, swiftly followed by his well-mounted generals, Lee, Heath, and the rest.

On arriving at head-quarters, the party were met by the adjutant-general, the gallant Read, who hastily addressed the commander—"The guards, sir, have been all beat in, and the whole army are now at their respective posts, in order of battle."

Washington, on hearing this, turned coolly to his officers, and dismissed them with this brief order—"Gentlemen, you will

will repair to your respective posts, and do the best you can*."

Here they separated, each officer repairing to his own division, which he found in the lines, firmly awaiting the charge, which had already commenced on the right of the Americans, by a column of Hessians, the forlorn hope of the British army. They were commanded by general De Heister and colonel Rhal, who directed their first attack against the Americans that were posted on an eminence called Chaderton's Hill, commanded by general M'Dougall.

The cannonade now became brisk on both sides. Suddenly the enemy's right column, consisting of British troops, under the command of general
K 4 Leslie,

* See Heath's Memoirs.

Leslie, appeared in the road leading to the court-house, in front of Heath's division, on the American left. This advancing column was preceded by about twenty light-horsemen, in full gallop, brandishing their swords, as if they intended to decapitate every Yankee they could reach.

Without hesitation they leaped the fence of a wheat-field, at the foot of the hill on which the brave Malcolm's regiment was posted ; of which circumstance the cavaliers were not aware, until a shot from a field-piece struck in the midst of them, and unhorsed one of the party without ceremony.

This being a hint that the gentlemen could not well misunderstand, they wheeled short about, and galloped out of the field as fast as they came in ; nor did they slacken their speed, until a friendly

friendly hill left nothing but the tips of their plumes for Malcolm to waste his fire on.

Whether it was owing to this circumstance (the precipitate flight of his horse), or to previous arrangement, it is certain that the British column advanced no farther up the road, but suddenly wheeled to the left, by platoons, as fast as they came up; and passing through a bar, or gateway, directed their head towards the troops on Charderton's Hill, already engaged with the Hessians.

The appearance of this column of well-disciplined troops, the flower of the British army, was truly imposing. Their brightly polished arms, bristling with bayonets, glittered in the sunbeams with almost a dazzling lustre. What a contrast to their undisciplined opponents,

nents, the American militia, who, with rusty muskets, irregular accoutrements, and scarcely a bayonet to a platoon, stood before them undismayed, and (even when vanquished) unsubdued!

The cannonade still continued brisk across the Bronx; the Americans firmly retaining their position on the hill, and the enemy directing all his energies to dislodge them. Convinced, at length, that long shot would never effect the object, preparations were made to come to closer quarters.

For this purpose, a part of the enemy's left column, composed of British and Hessians, forded the river, and marched along, under cover of the hill, until they had gained sufficient ground to the left of the Americans; when, by facing to the left, their column became a line parallel with their opponents. In
this

this order they ascended the hill, with a quick movement.

The fire from the British artillery now ceased, of course, in order not to endanger their own men, who were bravely advancing to charge the Americans on the summit of the hill ; but the fire of the musketry between the two parties was so rapid and incessant, that it was impossible to distinguish the sounds.

The Americans finally gave way before superior discipline, and moved off the hill in as good order as could have been expected. The British ascended the hill very slowly, but in that close, compact order for which their infantry are so justly celebrated. There is no doubt, however, that every man felt glad when he had reached the summit, where they formed and dressed their

line, without evincing any disposition to pursue their retreating foe.

The fact is, both parties felt perfectly willing to rest awhile, after the fatigues of the day. It is true, that obtaining possession of the contested eminence gave the British great advantage over their opponents; but feeling too sore to pursue this advantage, they were content to let things remain as they were for the present.

During this action, which ought to be called the "battle of Chaderton's Hill," several hundreds fell on both sides. It was a waste of lives, without much advantage to either party. In the midst of the engagement, however, the American baggage and stores were moved off in full view of the British army*.

Washington

* "The brunt of this battle," says Shallus, "was sustained by the American general M'Dougal,

Washington soon after changed his front, by drawing back the right and centre of his forces to some hills in his rear, and leaving the left wing in its former position; thus forming a line nearly east and west, fronting his enemy on the south. In this eligible position he expected and desired an action; but the enemy did not see fit to make the attempt. He afterwards withdrew the whole army to the heights of North-castle, about five miles above White Plains, near the Connecticut line, where his position was so strong, that Howe found it necessary to adopt an entire new plan of operations.

In the mean time, Crosby was enjoying

gall, posted on the right of the American army, who nobly sustained his post with six hundred men, against the British army, though basely deserted by four regiments of militia, who fled on the approach of two hundred and fifty light horse."

ing ease and luxury in the “cave of the mountain,” which was regularly supplied with provisions by several farmers, who secretly favoured the royal cause. He found the captain to be a good-humoured, jovial fellow, somewhat coarse in his manners, but not a disagreeable companion. As he and Crosby lived and messed together, they were, of course, on the most familiar terms of intimacy; it will therefore be readily conceived, that the latter soon made himself acquainted with every particular of the other’s plans.

“ In three days, my lad, we shall cross the Highlands,” said the captain, gaily, as he folded a letter which had just been handed him by our hero’s late employer.

“ In three days,” repeated the other. “ Let me see—that will be Tuesday, as this is Saturday.

“ Yes, this is Saturday, and to-mor-

row

row will be Sunday, when your motley psalm-singing rebel army will be chaunting hallelujahs through their noses; that is, if our cavalry did not shave off those vocal appendages at White Plains."

"According to the letter you have just read to me, it would seem that some of the royal cavalry have been even closer shaved by the rebels in Heath's division," returned Crosby, with a slight indication of humour in his countenance.

"By Heaven!" exclaimed the captain, "you look and talk as if you were glad of it."

"I should be glad to have been in their situation," said Crosby, drily.

"Where? Behind the hill?"

"No—I would have cleared the hill, and made for the *Heath*."

"Good! by ***! If the flash of your musket be like that of your wit, you will be an honour to the corps."

"Wit

" Wit sometimes wounds a friend."

" Then there the comparison ends, for your musket will only be levelled at the rebels. But come—let's to business. Do you know where the little heap of earth stands which the Yankees call Butter Hill *?"

" Yes—at the north entrance of the Highlands, opposite St. Anthony's Face †."

" True;

* This is a high cobble hill, on the west side of Hudson River, opposite Breakneck Hill. These are the northern hills of the Highland chain.

† *St. Anthony's Face* is on the south side of Breakneck Hill, at the north entrance of the Highlands, sixty miles from the city of New-York. Its name is derived from a ludicrous resemblance of a colossal human face, as seen from the river. The rock which has this appearance, exhibits a good profile of a face of thirty-two feet, aided by a little fancy, and a relish for the marvellous. A tree which grows upon the chin, just reaches the height of the eyes, and kindly spreads its branches for the eye-

"True; and were that break-neck rock a real living saint, and the opposite hill composed of genuine Goshen butter, d——n me, but the saint's mouth would water. But, as I was saying, on the western side of that mountain (for so we would call an eminence of fifteen hundred feet in England), is a lonely barn, belonging to a good loyalist, and a d——d fine fellow. To that barn we must all go on Tuesday evening ; and after taking an hour's rest in the hay-mow, pursue our course to the royal lines. To-morrow you and I will bid good-bye to this cursed hole, as my friend S**** has generously offered to accommodate the whole of us, until we march."

Having

eyebrows of the saint. There is another promontory, opposite the site of Fort Montgomery, five miles below West Point, which is called St. Anthony's Nose, but the resemblance is less remarkable.

Having nothing to oppose to this arrangement, Crosby made no objection; and Sunday evening saw the whole corps (about thirty) assembled at the house of Mr. S****.

But how was the committee of safety to be made acquainted with these circumstances? This was a question that, for some time, baffled the ingenuity of our hero, as he was aware that he could not absent himself a moment without exciting suspicions.

At length, however, he hit upon a plan, and hastened to put it into execution. Taking the captain apart, he thus commenced it.—“I am apprehensive, sir, that our being here all together may turn out bad policy.”

“Your reasons, Jack, your reasons,” said the other, with a dramatic air. “The devil’s in it, if we are not retired enough;

enough ; there is not a neighbour within a mile."

" It is just such retired situations that Townsend's rangers are always searching. They seldom seek for organized companies of loyalists in populous villages."

" D——n Townsend's rangers ! They are over the river."

" That's not certain. They are every where by turns, and nowhere long. But let us suppose the worst. If the rebels should discover us, and surprise us all together, the whole corps is at once annihilated. But if we disperse until the hour of marching, they can only pick up one or two, and the main body will remain safe."

" D——n me, Jack, but you shall be my orderly. Your advice is good, and we will separate immediately. No one shall know where another sleeps, and that will prevent treachery. There's
an

an improvement of my own, Jack. Go —choose your own lodgings; and you need be at no loss in this *bundling* country of yours. But recollect, here we all muster at seven o'clock, on Tuesday evening."

With these words they separated; when Crosby lost no time in repairing to the house of a man whom he knew to be a warm friend to the country, and desisted him to saddle his horse instantly, and carry an express to the committee of safety, at Fishkill. The other complied without hesitation; and, while he was preparing for the journey, our hero wrote the following communication:—

" *To the Committee of Safety.*

" GENTLEMEN,

" I hasten this express to request you to order captain Townsend's company

company of rangers to repair immediately to the barn, situated on the west side of Butter Hill, and there to secrete themselves until we arrive, which will be to-morrow evening, probably about eleven o'clock; where, with about thirty tories, they may find,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ JOHN SMITH.

“ *Monday evening, Nov. 4, 1776.*”

As soon as this express was despatched to Fishkill, Crosby repaired to the house of his former employer, where he remained until the hour appointed on the following evening, when (his messenger having returned with an answer) he rejoined his company, which was now assembled at the house of Mr. S****. Every thing being arranged for their departure, they took leave of their
loyal

loyal host, and cautiously proceeded across the country, to Cornwall, where they forded Murderer's Creek, and soon reached the solitary barn, where they contemplated to rest in safety.

Completely jaded by their long and rapid march, every one was eager to secure a snug birth in the hay, in order to snatch an hour's repose before they resumed their journey. Our hero nestled down with the rest, close to the side of the building ; and, in a few minutes, he was the only individual awake.

In about an hour he heard some one cough on the outside the barn. This being the preconcerted signal, was immediately answered by Crosby, through an opening between the boards ; and in the next moment the building was filled with armed men, headed by captain Townsend, accompanied by colonel Duer,

Duer, one of the committee of safety, who had given the signal before mentioned.

" Surrender!" exclaimed Townsend, in a voice that started every drowsy slumberer from his rustling couch. " Surrender! or, by the life of Washington, you have taken your last nap on this side the grave!"

No resistance was attempted, for none would have availed against such fearful odds. Some gave up without hesitation, while others endeavoured to conceal themselves in the hay; but they were soon dragged forth, and mustered on the barn-floor, where several of the rangers were stationed with lanterns.

" Who commands this band of heroes?" demanded Townsend.

" I do," answered the Englishman, promptly

promptly and proudly. "I have the honour to bear his majesty's commission, and demand your authority for this arrest and detention."

"The authority of the continental congress, whose commission I have the honour to bear," answered Townsend. "I shall therefore trouble you for such papers as you may have in your possession: we pledge ourselves, however, that nothing of a private nature shall be detained."

The Englishman reluctantly complied with this military usage, and at Townsend's request, proceeded to call his own men by the muster-roll.

At the name of Enoch Crosby, no answer was returned.

"Search for him with your bayonets!" exclaimed Townsend; and fifty blades were instantly plunged into as many

many different sections of the hay-mow. Our hero now began to think it high time to show himself, and ask for quarter.

On descending to the floor, the first person he recognised was colonel Duer, a member of the committee, who had accompanied the party for the express purpose of affording Crosby an opportunity to escape; but this generous intention was completely frustrated by the zeal of Townsend, who instantly knew the prisoner, and seized him with an arm as muscular and sinewy as his own.

“ Well met again, old comrade!” exclaimed the ranger, with a smile of triumph. “ You showed us a light pair of heels at Fishkill; but if I do not see them made sufficiently heavy this time, may I never be a major.”

"Who is he?" inquired Duer, affecting ignorance of the prisoner's person.

"Enoch, the patriarch," returned Townsend, smiling at his own conceit; "he who disappeared from the church in Fishkill, almost as mysteriously as his ancient namesake is said to have done from the earth."

"It is true, he did play us a slippery trick," observed Duer, who thought it necessary to say something; "but we cannot blame the poor fellow for consulting his own safety."

"Poor!" echoed Townsend. "If he be poor, John Bull must pay him ill."

"Yes, indeed," said the lieutenant, who felt his own honour a little piqued at Crosby's former escape; "King George owes him a dukedom."

"And congress a halter," added the captain, as he resigned the silent subject

of these sarcasms to two men, who soon shackled his limbs in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of his again giving them the slip.

As soon as the prisoners were all secured, the party were ready to march ; and, " to shorten a long story," as Crosby quaintly expressed it, not many hours elapsed, before he found himself in full view of the stone church at Fish-kill.

But Crosby, it appears, had forfeited the protection of the church ; for while the other prisoners were conducted into that friendly asylum, he was compelled to march a mile further, to a farmhouse, on the east side of the plain, which lies in front of the village.

Here he was permitted to halt ; and soon discovered, that it was not only

the temporary head-quarters of captain Townsend, but the permanent residence of Mr. Jay, chairman of the committee of safety.

This circumstance, however, was not likely to operate in his favour, as Townsend immediately adopted such prompt measures to prevent the escape of his prisoner, as evinced the deep interest that officer felt in his detention. Crosby was placed in a room by himself, and a guard detailed for his security, comprising some of the most vigilant members of the corps.

All men must eat at times, and captain Townsend had fasted for the last twelve hours. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that he awaited the preparations for supper with no little degree of impatience. This feeling, however, was frequently beguiled

ed and diverted, by the frank, free, and insinuating address of a rosy-cheeked lass, who, on this occasion, officiated in capacity of housemaid.

The captain was no anchorite, and the maid appeared to be scrupulously attentive to his most trifling wants ; until he became so completely absorbed with love, wine, and broiled chickens, that he forgot there was such a man as Enoch Crosby in the world.

But Miss Charity was too liberal in her opinions of right and wrong, to

"Feast the rich, and let the humble starve."

She very considerably reflected that the sentinel at Crosby's door might probably be as sharp set as his captain; and under this impression, without consulting the superior, prepared him another

chicken, which she accompanied with a bottle of Jay's best old French brandy. How the ranger relished the joke was never accurately ascertained; but one thing is certain, that owing either to the quality or quantity of the liquor, he actually fell asleep on his post.

About midnight, our hero was aroused from an unquiet slumber, by a gentle shake of the shoulder. On opening his eyes, he beheld the figure of a female bending over him, with a dark lantern in her hand.

"Follow me, without speaking," said she, in a whisper; "and hold fast by them ugly things, that they don't make a noise."

Crosby instinctively obeyed in silence, and followed his fair conductor from the apartment. For a moment he paused to

to gaze at the snoring sentinel, while Charity carefully closed and locked the door. She then led the way through a small garden, in the rear of the house, and pointing to the West Mountain, against the side of which the moon was pouring a stream of mellow radiance, she bid him haste to seek a shelter amidst its almost impenetrable fastnesses.

"But how have you effected this?" asked the bewildered and astonished prisoner; "and what will be the result to yourself, and that careless sentinel?"

"Fear nothing for either," hastily replied the girl; "but hasten to the mountains. I shall instantly return the key to Townsend's pocket, who is himself snoring on the sofa. Doctor Miller's opiates are wonderfully powerful, when mixed with brandy. Now, fly

for your life! The sentinel shall be on his feet when the relief comes. You have not a moment to lose. I shall be at Hopewell by the time the alarm is given. Not another word—I want no thanks — Jay is your protector — Fly!"

With these words she disappeared in the house.

The heavy shackles with which our hero's limbs were encumbered, allowed him to move but slowly. The coast was perfectly clear, however, and the moon illumined the whole of the plain before him. No obstacle appeared to oppose his progress to the mountain, which, rising like a huge pyramid, seemed to invite his approach. He advanced with confidence, but with tardiness and fatigue, until he reached a little thicket on the left, where he determined

ned to stop, and, if possible, free himself from his fetters. This object being effected, after much exertion, he bounded forward, with a heart as much lightened as his heels, until he found himself beyond the possibility of pursuit, among the intricate passes of that gigantic eminence.

On the following morning, Townsend found himself refreshed, the key in his pocket, and a trusty sentinel before the door of his prisoner's apartment. There was no other outlet to the room, except a window, closed with a strong shutter, and guarded by another sentinel on the outside. No alarm or noise had been heard by any one during the night, and what doubt could there be of the prisoner's safety?

But words are inadequate to a description of Townsend's feelings, when
on

on taking the key from his pocket, and unlocking the door, the apartment was found evacuated, and without a tenant. The guard were all summoned, but every one protested his ignorance and innocence of the prisoner's escape; and all united in expressing their surprise that a man in irons could creep up the chimney. But there was no other alternative; if he did not escape that way, which way could he have made his egress from the apartment?

Captain Townsend could not forgive this second deception; he felt that his honour, as an officer, was implicated; and inwardly swore that if Enoch Crosby became his prisoner again, a very summary process should put an end to his career*.

* See the Spy, Vol. I. Chap. V. three concluding pages.

END OF VOL. I.

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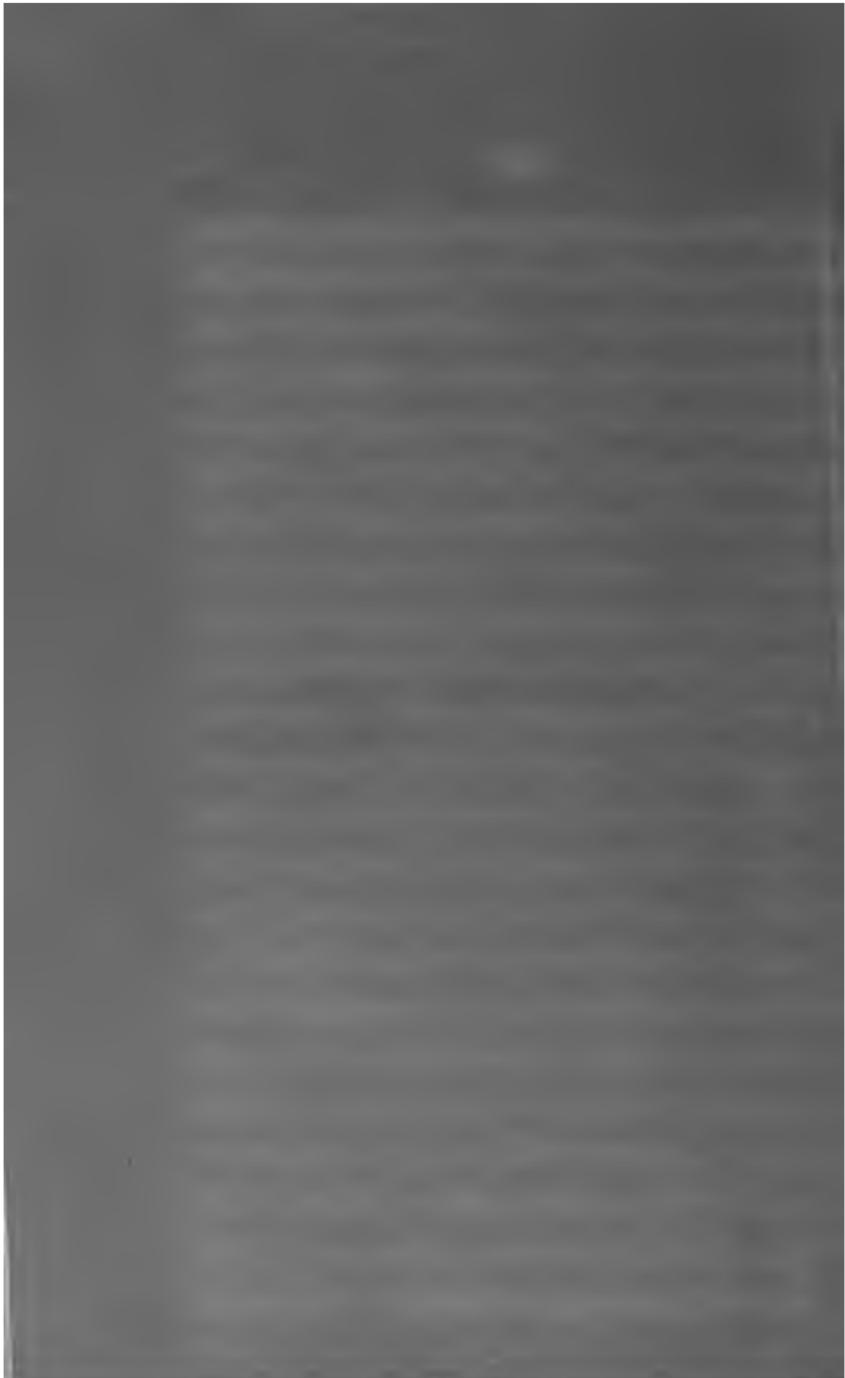
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